ARAB HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

ON THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW CENTURY

PRACTICAL MECHANISM FOR EFFECTIVE PROTECTION...

Iuderaction Rabat Conferences
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Rabat – Morocco

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Translated by
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The Arab Program for Human Rights Activists

The Moroccan Association for Human Rights

ARAB PROGRAM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS (APHRA)

Is a non- - governmental organization , non-profit, registered in Cairo - Egypt in April 1997, as a practical step and positive development of continuos general and public discussions about the problems, needs, and aspiration of activists working in the field of human rights.

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Is a non-governmental Association established at Rabat , Morocco in 1979 , it works in the field of defending and supporting human rights situation in Morocco.

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Dedication

To our colleagues and activists that paid the terrible price for their belief in human rights.

for those who proceeded , and those still on the way.

Specially to :

- Yousef Fathallah
- Mansour El Kikhia
- Ali Fadul
- Sahnun El Gohary
- Abdullahi Monasir
- Aziz Sayed Basim
- Farag Fouda

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Preface

"ARAB HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS ON THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW CENTURY ... PRACTICAL MECHANISMS FOR PROTECTION! *Is a documentation of the activities and papers presented in the first Arab human rights activists' conference held in Rabat ,Morocco 3-5 December 1999.*

This book, in view of the importance of covering the event, summarizes all speeches and researches presented in the conference .The appendixes also include the Rabat declaration, list of participants, and APHRA`s two proposals for effective and practical mechanisms for the protection and support of Arab activists.

Finally, we express our deepest gratitude to our fellows who attended the conference and took on the responsibility of making the conference more effective. With special thanks to:

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY (NED)
and
Fridish Na'uman Foundation (FNF) –Cairo Office

For their fruitful cooperation and kind support to our conference activities.

[1]Aymen Tabir
Editor

[1] APHRA`s Program officer and International relations Coordinator

[2]Introduction

[3]By : Kamal Hamid Mogeeth

The human rights movement in Arab nations is relatively modern; its age does not exceed a quarter century by much. Yet, undoubtedly, it has been responsible for great successes.

Most international human rights treaties entered into the framing of Arab laws and constitutions after signing and ratifying them. Human rights centers spread through different Arab nations along with the numerous facets of the field, like rights of women, children, prisoners, disabled, freedom of expression, innovation, political participation, etc.

Centers succeeded in attracting the learned and agitators in many Arab countries. Through their research, they impacted their nations through their Arab defense of human rights.

The greatest of these effects, was human rights taking its proper place on the international level institutionally, legally and on the level of human rights activists.

It was not possible in the shadow of these consequences for the Arab human rights movement to continue confined in scope within Arab nations alone. From there Arab governments have largely been unable to go on ignoring the reports and press releases of human rights studies. The Moroccan government has actually appointed a minister for human rights.

In spite of all of this – maybe even because of it – Arab human rights activists have sought to describe and prevent abuses, beginning with murder and bodily harm, on to kidnapping, arrest, torture, arbitrary firing, revoking citizenship, banishment, calumny, and slander.

This was one of the reasons behind me calling for a conference on "Human Rights Activists Upon the Doors of A New Century: Instruments of protection and inspiration". Another reason: in spite of successes, we in the Arab human rights movement have the ability to play a larger and larger role in Arab society.

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[2] The Introduction of the Arabic Copy .

[3] Egyptian Writer and Human rights activist

The conference was held in Rabat, Morocco between 3 and 5 December 1999. It was necessary to collect all the conference papers along with the discussions and speeches that accompanied them in one book.

In the introductory chapter, **Haytham Manaa** discusses preconditions of the Arab human rights movement. Most importantly, the movement is an issue of discipline before excellence. It is not about material gain.

The environment that trespasses this morality is a product of oppression. Under oppression, such morality is not reproduced.

Haggag Nail treats some problems befalling the Arab human rights movement. One of them is the communication and knowledge revolution, and the international circumstances that have been imposed as a result. This is especially true after the fall of the Soviet Union. The problem is national sovereignty in the context of the concept of globalization of human rights and human rights activists who spread these rights throughout the different parts of the globe.

Mohamed Augar points out some of the features of the Moroccan modernization project and its relationship to respect for human rights principles.

Abdel Rahman Bin Amro treats some of the tricky tasks that face the Arab human rights movement, like a study of how to unify human rights agitation throughout Arab countries and overcome regional differences, personality conflicts, and dealings with national, democratic and nationalistic forces.

DuKs Roeder speaks about cooperation between international and local organizations on the horizon, especially in the context of various and natural differences in opinion between people and organizations.

In the first chapter, **Mohamed Hafez Yaqub** deals with culture and humane rights through three observations linked to legitimacy of human rights as a philosophical principle that forms the basis for human rights thought. He discriminates between the idea of a right, its principled justice, and the idea of positive human rights based in legality. He also speaks to the awareness-raising dimension of Arab work in human rights and the sources of its legitimacy.

Hassan Iz Belqasim treats international instruments for protecting cultural and linguistic rights as applied by the human rights movement in Morocco.

He discussed the concepts of ethnicity, minority, and nation between homogenization and protection. He talked about the Convention 169 on Indigenous Peoples in Independent Nations. He finished by discussing the components of the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In chapter two, **Hussein El Awadat** treats the communication revolution and the democracy of knowledge. He presents features of the communication revolution including drawbacks. He treated knowledge, freedom of expression and the need for freedom to access and broadcast information.

Kamal Mogeeth spoke to the issue of human rights activist training and education and the needs of the age. He divided it up into three parts: the importance of training human rights, some local experiences on human rights education in Egypt, and human rights education in the framework of official, institutional education.

Hamouda Fathel Rahman discussed the question of activists and human rights organizations in exile and work conditions. He pointed out some Sudanese, Yemeni, Iraqi and Saudi organizations. He spoke about the difficult situation that human rights activists face outside of their countries: security pursuit, physical threats, and worries associated with subsistence and a decent living.

In the third chapter, **Abdel Rahman Bin Amro** spoke of fieldwork in human rights in his discussion of the concept of human rights fieldwork and sources of abuses. He talked about means to search, investigate and collect evidence necessary to prove abuse and the perpetrator. He spoke to instruments of fieldwork on the international human rights level and obstacles to their implementation, including financial, legal and psychological obstacles.

Gamal Eddin El Adimi treated problems of foreign funding, concentrating on the Yemeni case since the 1990 flourishing of political and NGO activity.

He spoke of fields foreign funding both useful and worthy of study. He discussed problems of funding, including legal problems. He discussed the minimum requirements of independence that NGO's must maintain. They are: intransigence, transparency in finances and administration, and securing all types of funding.

Fadil El Ghadamsi spoke of motivating administrative and financial performance of human rights organizations. He touched on the issue of voluntary versus professional work, the big picture versus specialization, centralization and authoritarianism; and then obstacles seeking to isolate human rights organizations.

In the fourth chapter, **Khalil Abu Shamala** speaks to the problem of coordination and competition in the human rights movement. He discussed some of the dangers facing Arab activists and the effect of exchange between them. He discussed the importance of activists from different Arab countries working together, illustrating some failures that occurred without this mutual support.

Hani Dahla treats laws restricting community work. He discussed the similarity between texts governing community work in different Arab countries. Two of the similarities: granting the state wide discretion in registering organizations and permitting operations, and security force control over organizations because of their power to terminate organizational work.

Hakima Shawi treats problems facing women's' political agitation. She chose human rights activists as examples and discussed the need to get rid of prejudice, traditional laws and all behaviors based upon the inferiority of women. This includes stereotypes of men and women and the importance of confirming that women have human rights just as men do.

The fifth chapter is concerned with the problem of sanctions on the Iraqi people within a framework of the relationship between human rights activists and sanctions against a people.

Kazem Habib treats the issue of Iraq and human rights. He presents three basic hardships that Iraq undergoes: international economic sanctions that Iraq has faced for ten years; interference from the United States and neighboring countries like Turkey and Iran in addition to air strikes that violate Iraq's sovereignty and its national independence; and actual availability of resources for democracy, freedom and human rights in Iraq in the face of an oppressive regime that has been in place for many years.

Abdel Hussein Shabaan treats the Iraqi sanctions as an international double standard. He wonders: what is desired from the economic

sanctions regime, whether in terms of internal or external activity? What is meant by international penal codes? He confirms that a lack of discipline in defining, as is necessary in international law, elevates sanctions to an act of ethnic cleansing. He deals with some of the instances in which the US used the UN as a tool to justify economic sanctions against certain countries like Yugoslavia, Somalia, Libya, Angola, Rwanda and Sudan.

In her address "The Iraqi People Confronting Barbarism", **Violette Dagheer** presents her experiences from a visit to Iraq. She speaks to what she witnessed in Baghdad as a result of vicious American acts that have left a mark on the landscape: crippled, corpses, fingerprints of children upon the walls, remains of people boiled in water during escape. She speaks to the development of events after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the institution of sanctions. She speaks to the economic, social, health and educational effects upon the Iraqi people.

The sixth chapter is on the Arab human rights movement and the burden of heritage. **Mohsen Awad** deals with the condition of Arab Organization for Human Rights and their unflinching position in the face of a shifting situation. This is an organization that has existed 16 full years. Mohsen Awad points out the nature of a network that is not pyramidal, but association. He speaks to the issue of organizational independence far removed from political parties and governments. At the same time he points out some cases the organization interfered in government practices that abused the rights of activists. Finally, he spoke to the proper sphere of AOHR as protection, publishing, and education.

Haytham Manaa deals with the issue of heritage. His position is that cultural, social and political heritage is a heavy burden on human rights activists. He notes his experience in the International Federation and his position on globalization as a balance between north and south in the Federation membership. He speaks also to the issue of democracy within the federation because the president rules alone.

The book ends by proposing an Arab campaign and rapid-action network and a solidarity fund entitled "**Together Against Hardship and Starvation for Human Rights Activists**", proposed by the Arab Program for Human Rights Activists.

Finally our deepest thanks to all our fellows that graced us with their presence at the conference and took on the responsibility of making the conference more effective

Human Rights Activists: Some Problems!!??

[4] Haggag Nail

Peering into the future of human rights activists is one of the goals that we must be interested in within the Arab human rights movement as we enter the third millennium. Of course, the actual work of the human rights movement differs within our various Arab countries according to the various circumstances in those states. The movement's activity also submits to the circumstances that are lived through; they define inclinations, shape cultural and ideological identity and they link the process to different restrictions that hem in the definition of a rights activist vis-à-vis time and circumstance in Arab nations. The circumstances of the movement differ from place to place. We can wonder if it is possible to talk about the particular, defined features of the Arab human rights movement at all. What is the impact of different social, political and cultural circumstances in different countries upon the work and orientation of the movement? What are the threats in this regard? How can we work together as Arab human rights activists with such rapid changes that the world is going through today? It is tantamount to the transitional phase between the Stone Age and agriculture. With this transition came fantastic revolutions in the development of technology and means of communications that surpass the borders of the world. There is a division between countries that possess, decide, and impose and those that cannot but receive and mimic. That is what shapes the environment between countries, especially developing countries, including our Arab nations. Many obstacles block the path to a speedy understanding of the age and its features for a number of reasons. There is no doubt that these transformations will leave a large impact on our Arab countries that are undergoing an opening divide between the forces that wish to slow history and those that have ambitions in the future. All this, and there is no social point of view that seeks to found definite institutions with their accompanying powers.

The eruption of a fantastic, globalizing transformation from a community of individual nations and regions to one that interacts in an unprecedented way has in fact occurred. It has even reached the realm of legislation in economic and commercial affairs, which were subsumed under GATT. No doubt, this will greatly affect many national economies that will become

[4] APHRA`s Executive Director

part of a total economy. We will have to question yesterday's givens like the Third World, North and South. It constitutes a crisis of conceptualization that demands rethinking juridical, political, and philosophical bases of human rights. How can we speak of the independence of the media and the West controls most of its means and production? How can we speak of national sovereignty and most southern nations are held hostage to debt that curbs their economies and crushes their ambitions?

No doubt human rights activists will not remain on the periphery of these threats. They directly touch the rights activists defend. With good tidings of the new millenium, comes the reality that -- for many of the reasons I have just given – cultural relativity does not have the power to confront globalization except by developing mankind and producing positive, motivating consciousness to take, give and reject close-mindedness. At the same time, the new culture must reject dominion from any source. The ambition for freedom must form the new concept of identity that will be formed in relation to the self and other on a new basis. Here, we must distinguish between opposition to dominion of force and the rule of its culture, and between human heritage and humane civilization advancing humankind forms that. The process of combining the two inevitably falls into the clutches of exploitation – exploitation of cultural identity through demagoguery. Demagogues announce their rule and abuse under the clarion-call of cultural relativity. In spite of all that, there is a discourse on Arab human rights. Sure, it faces diminishing local potential, a poverty of coordination, lack of cooperation and internal struggles filled with accusations along the whole line of activists, but we must understand this within an objective environment of Arab change that has been happening for years.

After a quarter century – the age of human rights – we are in need of stopping to ponder what we have achieved and ask if it was worth the amount of sacrifices we made. Are our weapons still in working order and able to take on ever-increasing abuses? Is our strategy still effective in this world that changes moment by moment? To what extent have we benefited from scientific and technological advances in communications? Do our organizations follow a practical management curriculum that inspires nobility and the rejection of injustice? What is our role in human development in the Arab region? What is incumbent upon us to do in the future?

All these questions, and others, beg us to stop and progress together...All these questions that we did not impose on this conference, have become an urgent and consuming issue that effects the world and those who abuse. We are going forward into a new century, a new decade filled with struggle and agitation to establish human rights.

The Human Rights Movement and Stipulations of Credibility

[5]Dr. Haytham Manaa'

Despite the advances that have been realized by the Arab movement for human rights, the turn of the century has found it in a deep and multidimensional crisis. In my opinion, it will be difficult to overcome this crisis without first admitting its existence, closely evaluating it assets, and rationalizing the desire for a solution.

The human rights movement appeared in the Arab world as the expression of a need. This does not detract from its importance, on the contrary, it gives it an objective dimension, and therefore legitimacy, which is important in any movement. However its appearance came at a difficult and embarrassing time in the region's history, from a generation deprived of the simplest expressions of freedom. However since then, caste society, which closes the doors of opportunity on its citizens, has come to an end with the invention of waves that that know no borders and images that cross continents. Such inventions have made every human on earth capable of strengthening popular oral culture that defies oppression, by way of discussions on the radio and television programs, and the secret circulation of banned books by electronic methods. The Greek concept of the human as a small world has returned, enhanced by technology that has transformed the entire world into one village. Such advancement is not just knocking on our door, but hammering at our minds, following an age in which the ruling powers held long reign and the Arab citizen lost determination of his public and individual destiny. The atmosphere has been, and still is, insulting to a rich and productive movement capable of action and influence.

However theory is one thing and real life is another, for every useful opinion or noble idea forms a "comprehensive subject" as Theodore Adorno says. The idea of human rights is liable to being used or targeted by different forms of power using various means. It is not unheard of that there be internal exploitation for personal aims, be they financial, political, or otherwise. In order for the human rights movement to preserve the least amount of credibility, we must always remember that we are not above humankind, and that human rights is an issue of commitment before it is a matter of distinction. It is a source of giving, not a source of gain, an environment which does not reproduce arbitrary "morals" but rather

[5] Spokesman for Arab commission for Human Rights (ACHR) – France

transcends them. Large numbers of politicians have entered the movement due to frustration and failure. Regrettably, some of them have not realized that they carry with them all the factors of failure and reproduce it in the legal world. To this day, the movement has unfortunately not given essential methodological rules their right, and these I list as five: the right of criticism, the right of difference of opinion, the duty of ethical accounting, democratic relations, and complete transparency. In many of the conference topics we will find these rules represented before another or us in one form.

The human rights movement is a new and definitive counter force necessary to the creation of a civil society. There are several weak points within the movement and its work style which have been permitted, and will perhaps be permitted in the future, to violate the movement and ruin its image and its effectiveness. I will attempt to quickly present theoretical and practical examples, which clarify my view of some characteristics of the crisis:

The first of these points is a financial matter. In the age of globalization, it is laughable for us to demand to have an organization deal with money without a fund secretary. As I have always said, the financial policy of any organization should be determined only by its members, and by free democratic choice. Any limitations imposed by the governing powers deprive the non-governmental organization from its natural right of independent decisions. Let us not forget that money does not create a human rights movement, nor does it produce activists. Accepting aid for general affairs and work for the rights of others is one thing, and using this aid for other ends is quite another. Paranoia of becoming rich is perhaps one of the most dangerous ailments our movement may suffer from. Money is power, and when a million is placed in someone's hand to run an organization and produce a journal, that person may lose balance. If such a person does not possess enough tenacity in activism or ethical behavior, we should not be surprised that the preservation of distinction becomes an end in itself. This in turn leads to harming others, in fear of competition.

The second point is transparency, a concept that unfortunately has been misused by its enemies, although this has not at all lead to the loss of its credibility. In the multi-power political world, or in the democratic countries which have borrowed from the western critical schools in forming its regimes, the politician is always accountable, as is the case for all who work in this general matter. This is essential for democracy and credibility in the human rights movement. If a politician forges a document, he is required by law to be removed from office. This issue is imperative to us all. We will not acquire legitimacy in combating corruption in society until we remove corruption from our field. We will not acquire legitimacy in combating the misusage of power over our heads, until we transcend

misusage of counter power, especially misusage of power in the world of human rights.

The third point is theoretical and structural. Ibn Khaldun preceded us in realizing it when he spoke of the passion of the oppressed in the manner of the oppressor. Some express it thus, " We are the weak (coming from the South) and we must, in an apologetic manner, deal with and follow the strong ones in the human rights movement (Western organizations)". This view reminds me of the inferiority complex of some of the Stalinist parties towards the big comrade in Moscow or Peking twenty years ago. In the world of human rights there is a toleration of mistreating the concept of the human itself. The futility of this has been confirmed by the appearance of skeleton organizations in the south of a high level, which have enriched the human rights movement on a worldwide scale and prescribed a new style of dealing based on mutual respect. In a world based on an economic, media, and geopolitical imbalance between the north and the south, there are psychological factors which explain the lack of self emancipation from the complex of imperial superiority in the northern countries. However, that does not at all sanction us to accept another form of conscription to the noblest expression of equality.

The fourth point that frightens me is that competition, in the negative meaning of the term, in the world of human rights is not a crime in itself. This is especially true in a world that needs non-governmental organizations to grow in number and quality. However, the world has not yet responded to the integrative relations necessary for realizing a part of its mission. So in this case, how can it enter negative competition, carrying with it the ailments of cliques, conspiracy reasoning, a license to mistreat, etc.?

I will suffice with this, and I'd like to repeat a word on the policy of preparing this conference. We strove, within the limited time and financial capabilities, to increase capabilities and diversity, combining new blood with the blood of the ancients, and found discussions between intellectual and civil activists. We also strove to invite those who represent the main trends in the Arab human rights movement. There is no doubt that there are important elements missing, whether due to lack of valid passports or our inability to extend invitations because of limited resources. However activism is in the heart, and it transcends physical forms. We will strive to send a packet of the works to every absentee.

Our view of this conference is that it is a part of the long procedure of compilation. This procedure began before us, and will continue to exist after we are gone. Our goal in the procedure of compilation is to benefit from every reaping, struggle, and experience that has had the honor of making its contribution to this turmoil.

The Moroccan Human Rights Movement Over Two Reigns

[6]H.E/ Mr. Muhammad Awjar

My Arab fellows and activists, it gives me honor to participate in the opening ceremony of this Arab meeting. It gives me great pleasure to welcome its convening on behalf of the Moroccan government, and I wish success for the organizers' initiatives. We are pleased here in Morocco to consult and benefit from the decisions and recommendations resulting from the discussions in your meetings.

I cannot let this occasion pass without praising the action and vitality of civil society, Moroccan society, and its legal organizations. I particularly praise the initiatives of the Moroccan Human Rights Organization, and its pan-national approach in attempting to establish an Arab arena for the human rights movement. We are delighted to have this meeting convene in our country. It comes in a series of meetings that have honored this blessed land. A meeting was held last year in Casablanca, and there is a series of joint programs run in coordination with the Ministry and the Arab Organization for Human Rights, which aim to raise the standards of human rights.

Therefore, it gives me great pleasure for this meeting to take place, at a time when Morocco is going through a historical phase and a peaceful revolution led by the young king. He has clearly announced his modern political agenda and his general plans for establishing a state based on truth, law, respect for human rights, expansion of freedoms, a foundation of democracy, and another look at the concept of power. This agenda comes at a time when our country is preparing for the coming century, and our experience has matured. In the early nineties, King Hassan led a number of initiatives and recommendations in the legal field, which accommodated a varied political experience. The king entrusted the command of this to one of the human rights activists, Abd Al-Rahman Al-Yusifi. Since the government adjustments, the government has insisted before the House of Representatives that democratic human rights be firmly established in the country. It clearly announced that Morocco in the coming century will not be anything but a Morocco of democracy and human rights.

Once again, I repeat my welcome to the guests of Morocco. I wish success to this meeting, which has been undertaken by the Moroccan Human Rights Organization and the Arab Program for Human Rights

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[6] Minister of Human Rights in the Kingdom of Morocco

Activists. We are prepared to offer the necessary support for the advancement of a human rights movement in the Arab homelands, and we have undertaken Ministry meetings for education and training in human rights. We are considering convening a series of these meetings, as there are many difficulties facing this field. Welcome to all of you.

The Arab Human Rights Movement...and its Major Missions

[7]Abd Al-Rahman Bin Amru

This conference, which is being convened through the efforts of the Arab Program for Human Rights Activists and the Moroccan Human Rights Organization, is clothed with great importance for more than one reason, particularly:

It is the fruit of continual dialogue, coordination, and cooperation between the two mentioned organizations in the field of human rights.

The coordination between them has been made clear through their preparation of this conference, the selection of topics, frameworks and participants, and the organization of procedures and materials.

This conference includes participants from many Arab countries which are being harmed by a number of violations against human rights, whether they be civil, political, economic, social, or cultural. These countries suffer from a lack of institutions and mechanisms capable of protecting these rights, punishing violators, and seeking justice for victims. They also suffer from the presence of legal and practical obstacles, and objective and personal hindrances, which prevent the spread of a human rights culture, the raising of consciousness among the masses, and in some of them, authorization for forming human rights organizations. Others suffer, in one form or another, from limitations on activism and legal missions. The participants in the conference should not suffice with delineating the status of human rights, its reasons, causes, and effects in the Arab world and on a global level. Rather, in addition to that, they should also undertake an exchange of experiences of the organizations and legal actions in facing the circumstances incongruent to human rights within our countries and abroad. This should be done with an aim of changing the circumstances, eliminating their causes, and replacing them with states of truth, law, justice, and human dignity, in all of its long lasting virtues. At the very least, these changes should be made in the state charters specific to human rights, whether they are civil, political, economic, social, or cultural.

It is necessary to study the method of establishing a legal activist unity in all Arab countries, and overcome minor differences, personal struggles, and sensitivities. We must reach an agreement as to what we have, and leave behind what separates us.

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[7] President of the Moroccan Human Rights Association

It is imperative that we research the logistics of working with advanced democratic and national powers, locally and abroad, so as to unite the ranks for facing the enemies of human rights and overcoming them.

We must address the means of developing legal organizations in all Arab countries. These organizations have been careful to remain wholly independent in evaluation, implementation, and mobilization. Development is imperative, if they want to play a positive and successful role in raising the consciousness of the masses and mobilizing them to participate in the expansion and protection of their rights.

It is hoped that thought will be given in this conference to the logistics of creating an expanded, integrative, close knit Arab network for human rights. Its mission would be observing the human rights violations that occur in Arab countries and quickly reporting them to the legal organizations in Arab and non-Arab countries. This should be done with the necessary active measures to expose and resist such violations, eradicate their effects, and prevent their reoccurrence.

The Horizons of Cooperation…!

[8]Duks Roder

The Fridish Na'amun Foundation is concerned with spreading liberal thought and values, which cannot exist except within an environment respectful to human rights. Therefore, educational programs on human rights are an essential part of the foundation's programs. I would like to clarify that the first long-term project in the field of human rights was implemented twenty years ago. Actually, we have forty years experience working with human rights groups and foundations of the widest scope you could imagine. We have learned from our experience that a difference of opinions, strategies and trends is very natural among civil institutes, all of which in the end work for a noble cause, that being the expansion and protection of human rights. We have learned that it is impossible to create a total unity between activists, and we know that the preparation of this conference faced some difficulties. We understand completely the effect such difficulties may have had among the different parties. On our part, we have decided to realize our commitment to cooperation in this conference with its good program and important topics presented for discussion in the workshops. The Fridish Na'amun Foundation has always been committed to neutrality in instances of disagreement of opinion, usually being of a temporary nature, particularly since all the parties are partners of the Foundation. We work for an important cause, that is, the expansion and defense of human rights and support for human rights activity. Through our regional programs we encourage cooperation with activists, especially in discussion on the regional level of democratic development and protection of human rights. We Europeans have experienced tense times, and we have learned the hard way the importance of regional cooperation and mutual understanding. We hope to see complete development of human resources and democracy and economic powers in the near future, so as to realize an effective and fruitful economic cooperation between Europe and its neighboring countries south of the Mediterranean Sea.

Finally, I would like to greet you once again and congratulate you on convening this conference. I would also like to express our support for the organizers and participants of this conference. I wish you fruitful and constructive discussions on new points of departure for our cooperation.

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[8] Regional Director of the Fridish Na'amun Foundation- Morocco

Chapter 1

Culture & Human Rights

In Culture and Human Rights: Three Observations

[9]Mohamed Hafez Yaqoub

The organizers of this debate requested I speak to a controversial issue. It opens up all manner of issues that perhaps extend to the whole of public life in our entire society. How can I compare cultural problems facing human rights workers if I cannot compare political culture, or even politics?! How can I not -- and that is the issue at hand. From its roots to branches, the issue is woven with global social organization and the relations that form its flesh and blood. Relations of dominion form its core. How can I then condense the topic to defined points in a way that I can only say is superficial and lacking the necessary depth for comparison? How can I distinguish between cultural and other problems that touch upon Arab human rights work?! Can I speak to cultural problems only when at their root, they are necessarily political-cultural or, rather, philosophical-political? How can I deal with this issue that is charged me, if it is, at its root, an issue of renaissance itself? I mean that it is linked to questions that the fathers of the Renaissance put forward and that still form the core for Arab probing into power, the definition of its factors and causes, and exploration into obstacles to its classification.

How can I not be long-winded in my explanation? Permit me to begin with two hypotheses I hold as self-evident:

First: The mission of the cultured and opinion-leaders must be the questioning of givens, criticism of the societies that form a governing cultural mentality, and setting them straight. Clearly and concisely, it is a mission to criticize myths, dismantle them -- and how can I not but say -- turn them into rubble. This is what I call critical thought: prodding and wounding. Perhaps this is the basis of the work of the learned and the hard nucleus of their endeavors. As soon as the learned cease questioning or criticism, then they have stopped that which they have been charged; the examination of the world and the questioning of its details.

As for the second hypothesis:

Certainty is a lie. Or it is illusory. That is to say it begs definition that complies with facts, history, nature and people. It is the deeply rooted

[9] A Palestinian writer and of human rights activists

pillar of ideological consciousness. It is an assumed blindness which results in problems that I speak to now. These are cultural problems for Arab human rights work.

My introduction, then, will be in the form of three critical observations. Questionings. My purpose is to put forth problems, excite questions and invoke results. I do not give solutions nor pretend to have them. I present these observations in three parts that I will now give you:

The first observation is linked to legitimacy of human rights or the philosophical principle that forms human rights thought, missionary activity, and field work. Without making philosophical arguments for human rights thought, I go directly to meat of my first observation: the concept of the human as the social carrier of rights characterized as humane. Rights are humanity because those which distinguishes the being and defines its identity are these rights. Simply said, human rights are not legitimate except as they relate to human beings. Their meaning relies on the being's nature as human. Therefore, rights cling to the human as if it was the body, color of skin or height. It is attendant from the cradle to grave.

This suggests the following three hypotheses:

First: Human rights thought refers directly to the concept of humanness or evolution. It is the gradual progression from savagery to crudeness to a state of humanity. This is the final state. It is anxious and brittle. On one hand, it is a state constantly being created. On the other, the potential to regress is continually latent within it. Specifically, the 20th Century, with its wars, dictatorships, slaughter, barbarism, myths, and ideologies, leaves no doubt of the thousands of forms that humanity can take. I say that humanness is not a natural nor constant form in the human being, but earned. It is connected to human society and variously defined. Humanness and savagery are both social, human products; born, grown, and approaching disquieting proportions.

The second hypothesis is the necessity of discrimination between human and individual. The individual is composed first of a human but is not the fullness of humanity. He is neither humanity's only ingredient nor its end.

The third hypothesis:

The content of human rights thought is linked to the content of humanness in the transformation and evolution of human thought throughout history. I

will not explain this last hypothesis. It will suffice that I quickly point out my consideration is based on two interwoven, complementary hypotheses.

The first of them: the content of human thought itself is not stable. It is always shifting -- constantly being created and yearning for fulfillment and completion. Every generation stamps its image on the world. It proposes a definition of *human* and, likewise, *justice*. It works with laws born to this image, generalized. Each generation steps closer to rights of justice and equality and includes those previously camped at the margins.

The second of them: Philosophical expressions and contributions are neither engendered in a vacuum, nor cut off from general society in history.

I close my first observation with one of the possible questions linked to the issue of human rights. I propose to you all the following puzzle: Can the principle of human rights attains the bearing of reality -- indeed, an ordained reality? Or is it simply a procedural means; circumstantial and therefore relative to time. That is to say, does it express a defined social interest throughout history, or is it really classical Greek, bourgeoisie rights strategically adopted by the West to dominate the world, as some have said? Is it possible in the name of identity and all that is personal to offend these rights, as others have said? The last question is not supererogatory. If humane rights are circumstantial throughout history and confined to location, then its perspective and its treatment will necessarily change. Its theoretical comparison will change. This forms one of the central, basic considerations that learned Arabs and Arab opinion leaders must exhaust in study and clarification.

The second observation is linked to the first. The first began with my saying that humane rights turned to the idea of the human as the bearer of these rights. The second observation will treat the rights themselves.

I propose to begin with two issues:

First: I mention the differences between ideas of rights and the principles of justice, equality, ideas of positive rights and principles of legitimate rights. Or, rather, legitimate authority that prescribes them and works to implement them.

Second: The progression of positive rights is linked intimately to the concept of justice. I can say that the concept of justice submitted and submits to historical evolution. It continually widens, reflecting

circumstantial laws. Or, justice changes in a continuous movement of adjustment, pushing, and transfer within the eternal human progression that revisits and widens the scope of laws, constitutions, pledges, and social dynamics. Or rather, it seeks to diminish by necessity dimensions of boundary and separation in rights toward the goal of justice. (For laws are characterized by what jurists call restraint or exclusion. Every restraint must necessarily contain exclusion).

I finish this third observation with an apropos question. I submit a condensed form: How can a human rights discourse be established upon a philosophical support that offends the idea that human rights are natural to the human *ipso facto*?

The third observation relates to mobilizing Arab human rights work and its legitimate sources. I believe it will suffice to say:

Once upon a time, mobilization was against tyranny. It still occurs in the name of public rights or laws, to a large extent, and not in the name of human rights nor in the name of the human. Mobilization means, by nature, a strategic movement endeavoring to amend the balance of power and bring about good administration in the name of existing constitutions or because of abuses in broad daylight.

It significance of this is not lost on you. We can demonstrate two sides or dimensions of this.

First: Human rights do not form the philosophical rule of pretexts in fights against tyranny, which has often transgressed the borders of even elementary rights. This includes the right to live in addition to liberties: the rights to expression, assembly, protest, etc. Second: The governing political discourse over the past four decades has not dealt with juridical or constitutional issues from a human rights or other perspective relating to the rules of social relations; i.e. the politics of humankind. Rather, discourse has fit within a prophetic perspective linked to an historical philosophy -- movement by abridging the idea of progress.

The Arab human rights movement carries two heavy legacies with it by necessity. They come from the heritage of governing Arab political culture throughout the past decades -- a culture that still dominates Arab dialogue now. The first of them: the privacy of cultural identity and the body of common myths among us on the idea of cultural learning and its exceptionalist notion used in public resistance of human rights. The second: the legacy of Arab political experimentation that governed and

still governs the Arab people -- from individuals to societies -- by politics. Specifically, the most notable threats facing the idea of human rights in Arab nations are two in number. The reasoning is something like what follows. First, whenever possible, human rights are reduced to a political idea. Which is to say, human society is by definition political society. Second, an interwoven network of relations, which are therefore relations of authority, constructs society. So how can this negative, reductionism notion be rectified, both in an operational way and by those who work in politics?

The human rights movement is a moral force and not a physical or procedural one. No such power could have taken root in history as an optimistic social and cultural nexus. The most violent repression is not that practiced by police or bureaucracy, but that which dresses the socials mind in the uniform of oppression. Its foundation is upon development of the growth of a firmly-believed exceptionalism to the collective human, moral progression. It voids opening up the margins. There is nothing more obvious than this. The Arab position today is alienation from the movement of juridical-philosophical thought in human rights.

I close with the following question: Does philosophical weakness explain our feebleness of juridical thought? This recalls political dominion over Arab discourse. It reflects, as a mirror, the core cultural problems addressed by the Arab human rights movement. I contend that this point will speak eloquently to the greater threat facing the movement in years to come.

International Norms for the Protection of Linguistic and Cultural Rights and the Human Rights Movement

[10]Mr. Hassan Ez Belqasim

My presentation seeks to highlight international norms for the protection of linguistic and cultural rights in mother-tongue education generally, and the Amazaghiya language specifically. The right is connected to the right of peoples, ethnicity, minorities and linguistic and cultural groups to learn and be taught their language. It is an individual and social right. Therefore, the concept of a *people* and the relationship of this concept to concepts of ethnicity and a minority must be defined. The same for the latter's' relationship to both people and nation. Linguistic and cultural rights are tied to these concepts as social rights. The development of international norms on the protection of minority and peoples' rights (including the UN and the International Labor Organization) is away from a policy of assimilation to one of maintaining cultural identity. The development of rights to be taught a mother tongue and be taught in it are among the core issues of indigenous and minority peoples within the UN relevant working groups and within the national unity of member states. Especially within a democratic society framework, all people enjoy every right without discrimination on account of gender, color, language, religion, opinion, race, national origin, etc.

Definition of concepts of ethnicity, minority, people and nation, and their relationship to linguistic and cultural rights:

Professor Saad Eddin Ibrahim, in his book on minorities, took a group of definitions including this one from the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences; it states that "a minority is a group of persons distinguished from the rest of society by blood, religion, language..." (4) After collecting such definitions, he posited that minorities are taken to be groups of people distinct from the majority by one or more of the following characteristics: religion, language, culture or race.

But the concept in the Quilt Dictionary (Quilt 1977, p. 4527) is of a group of people "residing in one country that speak a single language with the same norms, same origin, and deferring to the same law or government, or who at least harbor ambitions for such."

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[10] Moroccan human rights activist

From a comparison of different definitions, we find that they intersect. We can consider the greatest element in each concept is what could be fit within the concept of *the other*. So while all these concepts are applicable in certain cases, we can find a single nation formed of a number of peoples and ethnicity.

7. Returning to the UN Charter, we find concepts used to define all human groupings, big or small, condensed into the concept of a *people* or *nation* by the logic of basic rights for individuals and societies. From the preamble of the Charter:

> **WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind...**

In 1957, debate arose around the words *original peoples* and *indigenous peoples* in the International Labor Organization (ILO) convention no. 107 concerning the number of peoples and groups in nation-states.

In 1979 the International Conference on Labor, convened in Geneva and attended by all nations, ratified Convention 169 on indigenous and original peoples in independent nations. The accord dealt with the following:

A. Indigenous peoples in independent countries distinguished by their social, economic and cultural circumstances.

B. Peoples in independent nations considered original peoples because of their descendant from inhabitants of the country or geographic territory that grew into a nation under occupation, colonization or by the drawing of its current international borders, who whatsoever be their locations maintain their own social, economic or political culture in whole or part.

From norms of assimilation to new norms of protection in international law:

All states and governments practice a policy of assimilation in relation to peoples and minorities found within their borders. Assimilation is based upon the principle that modernizing society will completely homogenize sovereign countries. Differences in language and culture will be stripped away in the final analysis. In spite of indications from the UN Charter on respect for peoples' cultures, every nation expends great effort and money

on policies destructive to minority and peoples' identities to forge a single, homogenized nation with one culture. This has led to great tragedy and loss from the collective human heritage, and all human societies are impoverished thereby. The Mexico Declaration on Culture, issued after the International Conference on Cultural Polices, spoke to this effect.

It was never easy for nation-states to succeed in their assimilation policies in spite of their repressive measures against peoples and minorities. In this last respect, resistance without equal has confronted us. All means were used to preserve identity, culture and organization in spite of repressive and assimilationist policies.

Assimilationist policies were embodied in ILO Convention 107 on original and indigenous peoples, as ratified in 1957 (11).

The convention was adopted on the principle of original and indigenous peoples as societies ruled by an irrevocable terminus at the end of modernization. These societies and peoples are considered only residents. No admission is made that they are peoples. The convention encourages assimilation by any means in a sovereign society.

14. As was previously noted, the persistence of linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and religious communities and indigenous and original peoples in defending their linguistic, cultural and civilization identity has brought on a revisitation of international assimilationist norms that reached their peak in international law under Convention 107.

There are new norms supporting preservation within a framework of preserving linguistic, cultural and civilization identity of peoples and minorities, alike. Chapter 27 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights is considered an important development in protecting minority linguistic, religious and ethnic rights. Also, norms developed positively in relation to original and indigenous peoples in ILO Convention 169 of 1979.

Development of international norms protecting linguistic and cultural rights, the rights of minorities and rights of marginalized peoples.

The UN was founded from the fear of nations after two World Wars wrecked havoc upon the globe. These wars exploded together because of Fascist policies that neither respected human rights nor the rights of people. They refused to admit the rights of minorities. Both were ignited

in the Balkans, where many peoples, tribes and ethnic, linguistic and religious communities reside.

Whoever takes a look at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) will notice that most articles begin with *everyone*. It focuses on the rights of individuals with equality and without prejudice. Some powerful founding nations refused to discuss social rights or express it directly in the UDHR.

From forced assimilation policies to norms protecting linguistic and cultural rights that preserve cultural and civilization identity to marginalized peoples, minorities and different communities:

Without fail, national forced assimilation policies seeking to absorb minorities, ethnic communities, or peoples met with unmatched resistance to preserve cultural and linguistic rights. Resistance demanded rights as a people. This caused international assimilationist norms to be called into question. It has been a topic on the table since the 1960's.

International norms focusing on rights of marginalized peoples and national, religious and linguistic minorities:

It was UN experts in international law that turned to revisit the UN Charter. The international community, especially human rights movements, experts in the field, and representatives of democratic governments in the Human Rights Commission made an interconnected review of the UN Charter to find texts and norms aiding the development of international norms and highlighting its wisdom. After considering that the UN Charter begins in its preamble *We the people of the United Nations* and not *We the states*...Particularly, it states its goal to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples. Also to, develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. It seeks to, achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion. (22) The progress of peoples in political, economic, social and educational affairs is the responsibility of nations, just as it is their responsibility to treat them with fairness and extend protection. All this must be complied with in accordance to necessary cultural respect.

The progression of rights of indigenous peoples:

A double progression or two similar progressions occurred. It began with interest in the reality of labor in relation to indigenous peoples before the Second World War. The other began as a development inside the UN in 1977.

Convention 169 on the rights of indigenous peoples:

ILO Convention 107 erupted from the interest in especially Latin American indigenous peoples. It arose within a framework of total incorporation and assimilation with respect to nations that were concentrating on *unifying and homogenizing* their peoples while encouraging denial of indigenous peoples' cultural identity and language. The issue was not protection of linguistic and cultural rights, as that was illogical according to assimilationist criteria governing international law at the time. Rather, nation-states were concerned with the balance of special exceptions made to indigenous communities as elements that threatened national unity and exposed the state to *discord and disintegration.*

The UN progression of rights for indigenous peoples:

The second progression continued and continues within the Human Rights Commission (HRC), under its auspices, and within its Committee on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The latter began by proposing resolution no. 2 (34D) dated 8/9/1981 establishing a working team on indigenous residents. HRC supported it in resolution no. 91 / 1982 dated 10 March 1982 and subsequently approved by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in resolution 34 / 1982 dated 7 May 1982.

Contents of the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UDRIP):

The draft UDRIP is being written. The Working Team on the Rights of Indigenous Residents prepared the initial draft. The final draft is pending before the HRC working group and consists of a preamble and nine parts.

The UN progression of rights of minorities:
Mention of the rights of minorities was not discussed within the framework of the UDHR even thought it was tantamount to an international treaty protecting the rights of individuals from discrimination based on color, religion, language, national origin, etc. The draft Covenant on the Protection of Minorities proposed by Hungary before the 1947 peace

conference in London was rejected, as were all other proposals calling for language on the rights of minorities in the UDHR (33).

Declaration regarding the rights of minorities:

The HRC passed a declaration in its 48th session, March 1993. It bears the name *Declaration on the Rights of Persons within National, Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities*. It consists of a preamble and nine chapters.

Grievance procedures before UN agencies to protect linguistic and cultural rights:

There are no substantive mechanisms for the protection of linguistic and cultural rights of the individual and society. What does exist is mostly secret and is permitted to enforce only symbolic "accountability" on nations responsible for abuses.

The basic form of procedures, difficulty in understanding them, and the preconditions for filing grievances constrict all meaningful, disciplinary action. Symbolic accountability lacks any legal binding. The limitations are pronounced in the various stages of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which has not yet even been ratified by most nations.

Grievance stages and their preconditions before the HRC within the Optional Protocol:

According to Article 27 of the ICCPR, the Committee for Human Rights was established. It consists of 18 elected members who work as individuals and who are from different nations with defined sovereignty. They are elected for four years; half the Committee is publicly elected every two years in an open session conforming to concepts of neutrality. The Committee elects a recorder every two years.

Right of UN peer nations and members of NATO to interfere to protect linguistic, cultural, social identity and human rights: Case of Kosovo.

The right to interfere to protect human rights and the rights of peoples is unimaginable outside the province of competent UN agencies. Outside of such legitimate international bodies, interference would tear apart international law.

Article 27 of the UN Charter is clear when it states that Security Council decisions are made by an affirmative vote of nine members including the concurring votes of the permanent members. The right to intervene was practiced in Bosnia with agreement of the UN, but there was never an affirmative vote from China, a permanent member of the Security Council. Therefore, intervention decisions were illegal.

As for Kosovo, NATO intervened outside international law. The viewpoint was that intervention was for the protection of the Kosovar people who faced ethnic cleansing and cultural destruction by the dictator Milosovic. However, NATO intervention at the same time denied the rights of Kosovars to the self-determination that the Kosovo Liberation Army called for. The Criminal Court, in its follow-up of Milosovic, made intervention legitimate in the eyes of the UN.

Chapter 2

Human rights Activists & The Communication Revolution The Spread of Knowledge...

The Communication Revolution and the Spread of Knowledge

[11]By: Hussein El Awdat

The Communication Revolution was part and parcel of the technological revolution. Communications became powerful enough to reach every person in the world, irrespective of borders or sovereignty. The recipient could know the happenings of other cultures; become aware of their experiences, worries, interests, and work. That same person could know extend experiences and opinions to others, surpassing borders of age and place.

Technological development and media/communication applications contributed to the progress of human history. Most of the time, invention lead to political and social change that affected innovation and was affected by it. After the invention of the printing press and other publishing and distribution innovations, knowledge spread wide according to the norms of the day. Peoples' ideas and mentalities were changed. Political, social, and economic revolutions spread wide across Europe. The middle class began to play a great role in development. Several factors worked together to transform the social economic system, applying pressure to the standing religious system. Sectors mutated and new classes arose. Concepts of freedom, justice, equality, and human rights spread far and wide. Written media was full partner in the motivations behind development. It pushed it forward. Later on, throughout our century, television and radio have spread ideas, opinions, knowledge, and events...

The immediate effect of the modern communications revolution, then: The spread of knowledge to new sectors of society. With this process came the growth of communication channels, a plethora of information, and the cheapening of its cost. The spread of communication and information came to Arab nations. Technological applications have brought television and radio broadcasts across satellites and computers able to quickly store, produce, and organize data. The appearance of information centers, networks and algorithms has allowed the obtaining of all types of knowledge immediately. With that, has come the chance to use this knowledge, reproduce it and then distribute it.

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[11] Syrian Journalist and human rights activist

From this, the following principle: technological advances have placed equipment capable of receiving and distributing knowledge in the hands of all people. It has made us a collective republic, voided hegemony of this prize, and cancelled its control by specialists. It has been able to play a role in the formation of peoples' mentalities, change values, and iron out differences among them. Knowledge is there within the financial reach of just about everyone. Perhaps the communication revolution has made knowledge democratic. It has given knowledge to the people by the vast amount of information carried by communication lines and the ease of their receival. Whatever their nature, culture or idea. This, at least, was possible after the communication revolution. But did the democracy of knowledge ever really occur within the environments it founded?

Negative Aspects of the Democracy of Knowledge

Because of rapid successes in scientific applications, communications technology developed according to special laws and not according to social need. This brought it away from the sphere of peoples' needs and welfare. Instead, the communications technology context imposed itself on advanced and backward societies alike. Telecommunications monopolies and states were forced to build various communications channels. Soon, sectors of society able to receive communications multiplied without there being a real need of such communications. This could have been because of a lack of desire for communications, inability to produce messages, or because social and political organizations did not allow or accept the increase in communication. Sometimes, such organizations did not even admit the right to communicate, knowledge, receive information, or freedom of expression. Another negative aspect accompanied the communication revolution: the increase in communications centralization. Government and private monopolies gained firm control over communications. It even reached the point that monopolies, themselves, demanded more channels of communication and a widening of their competence. Means of communication were relegated to monopolies when it was possible to avoid doing so. It aided the formation of a local boundary on communications and a monopoly of ownership on its means. Societies whose governments granted the right to communications did not surrender nor cease practicing democracy. Civil society also became centralized. The growth of these societies transformed into specialization. Means of communication became a contended prize. Ingular, centralized ownership destroyed the democracy of knowledge over media. This occurred in spite of the plurality of communication channels. There was one owner and one broadcaster. There were many channels. Recipients had no say. The abundance of channels has no import: there is only mono-ownership and mono-broadcast.

One of the greatest negative aspects of the communication revolution was the quantity of information that erupted and the surplus that has almost led to knowledge becoming superficial. The plethora of information became too much to follow. The quantity and superficiality may very well lead to recipients fleeing from media altogether. Recipients have become competent in highly specific superficial information and knowledgeable in specialized communication channels. This has lead to the alienation of individuals from their society as people access only partial, superficial and one-sided information. Individual knowledge has become partial, distant from the whole, and separated from need or necessity. When recipients cut themselves off or bound themselves within a subjective space, their immunities are weakened and their satisfactions made easy. The democracy of knowledge comes to nothing. The plenitude of information has increased cheerfulness and absurdity.

The communication revolution has played a double role in the filed of public democracy and the democracy of knowledge. Peoples of developing nations agitated for both at the same time. The communication revolution increased peoples' consciousness of the importance of public democracy and the democracy of knowledge. This led to the weakening of political parties, the educational process, and civil society foundations, which were only in their infancy. The revolution took the place of these institutions and disfigured their missions. Civil society was abolished before it was created. The revolution almost dominated direct contact and discourse, or at least tried to destroy it. So the potential for realizing instruments inside the society to carry about democracy were halted, disfigured and weakened.

The negative aspects are twice as bad in developing nations. They are still far from being able to develop media internally. Without fail, they do not possess the technology. Secondly, they do not fulfill basic preconditions of scale and other matters allowing communication to occur; e.g. freedom of expression, size, ownership and participation. Thus, developing people are faced with two large problems that fit squarely under the heading of negative aspects of the communication revolution and are in addition to the problems facing developed nations. Developing people face exclusion from basic human rights; chiefly the right to communicate, freedom of expression and the right to obtain information.

Knowledge and freedom of expression:

We can liken the right to communicate to the right of a person to obtain information and knowledge, to review the experiences of others, and the

right to expression. It is part of the right to receive information and knowledge of others. To contact them and discuss with them. To affect social and political controls and put them to the service of individual and society. At the same time, it is the right to assembly, discussion, cooperation and discourse to understand cultural circumstances and economic, social and cultural potential. It is a means to develop and advance society. To place these factors at the disposal of society itself. The right to communicate is intimately related to the make-up of the individual and the advancement of the group in freedom, democracy, and self-determination.

In this framework works the special rapporteur for the support and protection of freedom of opinion and expression, who answers to the UN Human Rights Commission. In his interpretation of article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights vis-a-vis the need for defending freedoms affecting information and its access, he said, ["Owing to the social and political role that information plays in contemporary societies, it is necessary to preserve the freedom of every person to receive information and ideas. This right is not just the reverse side of the right to transfer information, but inalienable unto itself."] The right to get information and bestow it is a core part of elements of freedom of opinion and expression. Such freedoms will be void of all impact should people not preserve their ability to obtain information. Therefore, the opportunity to obtain information is part of the central parts of a democratic life.

In International and Regional Agreements:

International and regional agreements have been greatly interested in issues of human rights, freedom of expression and the right to obtain information. These two rights constitute a special importance, and have stipulated important texts. Before the passage of the UDHR, the UN General Assembly (GA) resolved in resolution no. 59 of 15/9/1946 in its inaugural session that, ["The freedom to circulate information is part of basic human rights. It is the standard that all freedoms are measured by and a standard that the UN spares no effort to uphold."] After two years, the GA passed the UDHR on 10/9/1948. Article 19 states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression: this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

We see that the UDHR is concerned with the tight relationship between freedom of expression and opinion and access to information. We also see its insistence of the right to receive and impart information. This is also part of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) passed by the UN in 1966. Article 19 of the ICCPR states, [Every person has the right to hold an opinion without restraint, and freedom of expression].

The American Convention on Human Rights (1969) in article 13 states that [Everyone shall have freedom of thought and expression, and this right shall include the freedom to seek, receive and impart different types of information and ideas regardless of frontiers.] In the African Agreement on Human Rights, article 9.1 states [Everyone shall have the right to obtain information, express and impart thoughts within the bounds of the law.] Thus we see that most regional organizations have acceded to the right to communicate as part of freedom of expression and freedom to obtain information. We find that these organizations and signatory states have accepted the principle to obtain information and freedom to express it, whether or not they have actually put this into practice.

As for the Arab League (AL), a regional organization, it had another thought in mind. That is to say, they wished to completely ignore such rights in their agreements. No interest at all was taken in them. Various Arab nations have thus taken a very different course from the rest of the nations of the world.

Censorship authority is still the most notable process taken by Arab governmental organizations. This truncates freedom of expression and blocks off information to citizens. Most of the time, these organizations justify censorship as defense of "national values and welfare". Furthermore, the right to sovereignty, as defined in international law, gives nations the right to practice censorship over media and cultural products in its various sources and sectors. The distinction is that the technological and communication revolutions have practically abused the right to sovereignty. It is a fact. The practice of sovereignty is impracticable: "Who can, for example, stop satellite channels from broadcasting programming or censor its programs?" Tomorrow censorship will be dismantled in Arab nations as it has in other nations.

Censorship in Arab nations is imposed on all public and media activity, as well as on internal and imported production. This is especially true of the latter. The problem is that norms of censorship are undefined and obscure. There is no world set of norms for, say, "protection of morals,

religion and values". The ability to interpret and prioritize is unwritten. Therefore, censorship gives censors the right to block information from whole peoples according to their own opinions; to block knowledge from society according to fiat.

So it is with Arab nations that are still far from admitting the right to obtain information to their citizens. Arab nations ignore the revolutions of technology and communication. As long as this is the case, how can democracy of knowledge ever be realized, let alone other human rights?

Training Human Rights Activists and the Needs of the Age

Dr. Kamal Maghith[12]

Training human rights activists is one of the greatest threats to the human rights movement, especially within the region where local and global circumstances intertwine -- that is, human rights proper. It is also a problem marked by increasing numbers and kinds of abuses that people face, generally, and human rights activists, particularly.

In spite of the relative newness of the Arab human rights movement -- not longer than two decades -- it has become an exciting and effective movement to both governments and people alike.

The numbers of human rights organizations and centers have increased along with their goals and activities. These range from publishing human rights literature to monitoring abuses, extending help and so on. It is rare that we find a center interested mainly in education and training in human rights except as one of many activities -- something we will speak to later.

From here we can say that a great and true effort must be applied to the issue of human rights training and education.
This paper will present the issue in three sections:
First: Initial training for human rights activity, its importance and its areas.
Second: Practical experiences in human rights training (personal experience).
Third: human rights training in educational institutions.

As for the first section, there is no doubt of the number of factors that necessitate this training for the flowering and success of the Arab human rights movements. Of these:

- The diversity in human rights abusers: such abusers range from individuals in a certain social or professional position, or who hold public power that grants them the ability to infract on human rights. Possibly abuses can be committed across social sectors for various social, political, religious or other reasons. Possibly, the state can commit abuses through international organizations. Here

[12] Educational researcher and member of board of trustees of the Arab Program for Human Rights Activists (Editor of the Arabic copy for this book).

I look to the Iraqi case and the illogical interpretation of Chapter 7 of the UN Charter. No one who believes in human rights could support sanctions against a people as a result of a ruling political system, the terribleness of whomever committed atrocities notwithstanding.

- The diverse forms of abuses. There are abuses against individuals; abuses against their freedom or extralegal arrest. This could be for a number of reasons, including kidnapping, forced disappearance. People can face arbitrariness, torture by various means, as occurs in Israel. Torture there is allowed to obtain information from victims within the law, just as Palestinian houses are subject to ruin and confiscation as defined by the occupying power alone. Possibly, entire groups can be denied political and other rights.
- Some of the factors concern human rights activists: diversity of international agreements including the Universal Declaration of Human rights (1948: UDHR), the International Covenant on Social, Economic, Political and Cultural Rights (1966: ICSEPC). They are both well-known agreements and considered supports of international human rights legality. They brought about various types of agreements and covenants on refugees, native and original peoples' rights, torture, children's rights, rights of the handicapped, and equality between men and women.

Many regional agreements have been issued alongside, for example the Charter of the Rights of Arab, African and Other Peoples.

This is in addition to accords and procedures that organize human rights instruments like the UN Human Rights Commission and the European Human Rights Court.

Human rights training are concerned with various fields and sciences that affect it and human rights activists. Law is one of these fields. The human rights activist must gather a solid legal foundation of his state, beginning with the constitutions and its most important features and corollaries. He must now rights and duties upon each person and the authorities who framed that constitution. He must continue on to different laws, especially laws directly affecting citizens' rights, like the laws defining arrest procedures, detention and investigation, as well as laws governing the judiciary, public prosecution, police, prison guards, and so on.

Additionally, sociology, economics and sciences all affect human rights work. As does religious thought, its institutions and its interpretations.

- Human rights training aims to transfer human rights from theory to a working reality. There are three dimensions of human rights:

1. Theoretical and knowledge foundation in what I previously spoke about on agreements, he factors of their success and their limitations.
2. Skills preparation and practical preparation on how to face different human rights abuses.
3. Theoretical preparation, including related theoretical aspects of human rights including justice, equality, freedom and happiness as equal rights for all people without regard to sex, race, type, confession or so on.

- Human rights training aims to inculcate thought critical to the ruling discourse whether that be a cultural, political, or media discourse. It should shed light on aspects of agreement and differences with human rights and then administer substantive discussion on these discourses.

Second: Practical Experiences in Human Rights Training (Personal Experience)

I worked coordinating education and training sessions on human rights in the Legal Study and Information Center for Human Rights (LSIC). LSIC was run by Amir Salem from 1994 to 1997.

These were the first human rights training sessions, as there were not many human rights centers in Egypt at the time. That last fact was because no one had yet begun to develop interest in the topics of human rights education and training.

As for the units themselves (e.g. Publishing, Research and Information Unit) of LSIC, the Education Unit controlled planning, preparation and execution of human rights education sessions. The most notable features of these programs are as follows:

The name of the session and its slogan: Every session had a slogan or name of a person that played a great role for principles of justice, liberty and the defense of basic human values. Taha Hussein was one such individual. He was a popular thinker and chief proponent of enlightenment and democracy in Egypt and Arab nations.

Abdelrahman El Kawakaby was an Arab thinker among the proponents against colonialism and for Arab unity. Ibn Rushd was a great Islamic thinker that supported the right of education for everyone and sought greater humanity for men. Also, Saayed Darwish was included, a great Egyptian musician and singer of modern times. Siza Benrawi was also included, a proponent of women's liberation in Egypt who called for rights, full political participation and representation. The two substances of the sessions were the link between the name of the session (the person) and the nature of it. The session on the right to education was named "the Hamed Omar Session" and the session on women's rights was called "the Seza Nabrawi Session" and so on.

The substance of the session: sessions were specialized since the beginning. A session cannot deal with all possible topics. There was always a basic theme to the session that all work revolved around. For example, if the theme was education for everyone, then the discussion topics were the human right to education, the extent of problems in Egyptian education, education and development, impact of privatization and adjustment on education, and so on. There were sessions on political participation, freedom of thought, freedom of opinion, women and violence, etc. They dealt with human rights vis-à-vis education, for example, or vis-à-vis women, etc.

Targets: The sessions targeted young human rights activists in Egypt from among community and civil society activists. The number of participants ranged from between 30 and 50 in a given session.

LSIC organized a number of training sessions for children between 8 and 14 years of age. Of course, the children's' sessions differed in terms of subjects, activities, and participation. There was greater focus on play to maintain their attention.

Participants: Thinkers, writers, researchers and university professors all participated as befitted their fields. This was over and above human rights activists in Egypt.

The sessions relied on different instruments, including theoretical overviews.

The theoretical lecture had workshops that participants broke into in order to discuss different topics and draw conclusions. There was time to express opinions in complete freedom on all aspects of the session.

Many participants took advantage of the time to offer supplementary comments or their opinions.

Problems: there were many types of problems encountered. Fore example, there were problems relating to the participants. There was no way to assess the seriousness of participants beforehand nor verify in what capacity they worked for their organizations.

There was another problem with security interference that canceled a session for reasons not given. It led us to suspect that it was counseled because of the topic of women and violence.

There was no way to publish lectures or the work of the sessions, except by gathering a number of the topics and papers into a book named "Learning Rights and the Right to Learn".

After these sessions, a number of important human rights organizations were founded that had "human rights education" as one of their activities, e.g. Cairo Center, the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights. Unfortunately, they did not keep all the information of their discussions and themes.

In addition to the lack of information preserved, we can imagine some other problems:

Lack of a strategic focus: Any center, indeed the entire human rights education movement, lacks a strategy encompassing education, priorities and stages. Interest in training and education is according to the circumstances of individual centers, as is the potential to preserve information and make the necessary preparations. There is no overarching plan.

Additionally, there is no center that is based solely or mainly on human rights education. It is not uncommon that work is repeated or contradictory. Even in the best cases, a lack of coordination, efficiency and differences in activities do not allow education to reach its potential.

There is no doubt of the dependence on foreign funding as a problem in human rights education. This is common to the field and is dealt with by other papers in this conference.

The aforementioned problems are connected to the lack of a training body that has the experience and specialization necessary to make a training human rights organization effective. Effectiveness depends on the individual writers, researchers and professors that believe in the ideas and participate in the activities of human rights. But there aren't many used to training these principles and ideas.

I can turn to problems of teaching human rights because of the mixture between voluntary and paid work. There are no clearly defined standards to distinguish between them.

There are also problems stemming from, say, "clienteles relations" (the term was used in a lecture of the innovative writer Nabil Abd el Fetah). Such relations depend on knowledge and the exchange of benefits with scant attention to real exigencies surrounding training programs, and with scant attention to a substantive vision of trainers.

In this environment, there is no institutional memory collecting educational experiences, especially those that are vital and developmental. Centers and organizations cannot exchange experiences. They often repeat mistakes without realizing why. In exchanges, understanding strong points, developing them, and reinforcing them can be shared.

Third: Human Rights Education in Educational Institutions (Ministry of Education):

We now turn to educational institutions as opponents to human rights; educational institutions in Egypt are the only ones that have not witnessed a qualitative development since the beginning of the century. Educational activity is universally concentrated on rote memorization which everyone learns not to question.

Our educational institutions are abuses against our rights to learn, like the right of women, for example. In every Arab nation, women are underrepresented in different levels of education. Obstacles or presented in spite of every international agreement's testimony to their rights to education. In Egypt, they do not exceed 0.5%. This is in addition to the leaders of various minorities. I think their rights to education are abused to a great extent. So are poor and those unable to leave work for education because families cannot forego money earned from work. According to the World Bank in a report, 38% of

Egypt lives below the poverty line and cannot afford to educate their children beyond the elementary level.

Something Else on Human Rights in Curricula:

There is an opinion that perhaps is spread to the outside world that ministers of education are powerful and free to include things in curricula like environment, population issues and human rights. However, unfortunately such ideas if placed in the official curriculum would probably not cause students to support such issues, but invoke their opposition.

Also, many curricula contain strong anti-human rights ideas like the role of women. The issue is not just a problem of wrongs, but of hidden curricula as well. These are the sum of all experiences, knowledge and ideas that students learn outside the official curriculum. Both types of curricula are the realms of human rights. I will give some examples:

Educational tools linked to recall and memorization end up by reducing students to numbers. Say, in history I get a 25 / 40 on a test. That doesn't mean that I understand history really. If I was right there in the '19 Revolution, would I have supported it? If I was there at the Second World War, would I have supported Hitler or the other drunkard? That number is the form of inaneness that students are subjected to.

Classroom tools are also deficient. I stand when I am told to, sit when the teacher tells me to. Discipline is by the signals of the teacher, observer, director, test or book. The school disciplines dissenters and, thereby, destroys innovators...How many poets have we punished because they wrote in geometry...There is a thread that passes through education, religion and the military that opposes human rights.

Mixing concepts of education with concepts of child-raising. It is strange that leaders of educational institutions take pride that they are child-raisers first and foremost. At the end of the day, one might ask what is child-raising? It appears to be conquest, repression and destruction of innovation and difference.

My final point is about the tens of thousands of teachers that have gone to oil countries where a Bedouin moors oppose human rights fundamentally. These teachers become beaten down by environmental Islam and are warned against effectiveness and

difference and all that considered human or humane. These are a strong cultural force against the culture of human rights.

In closing, the issue of human rights training and education is an issue that must be faced with effort. We must equate our well-being with the importance of knowledge and work.

Human Rights Organizations and Activists in Exile ... Problems and Work Mechanisms

[13]Dr.Hamuda Fath Al-Rahman

Introduction:

The past decade has witnessed a noticeable increase in the number of organizations working in exile. This has of course been accompanied by a large increase in the number of activists and variety of activity. Most regrettably, this reality reflects the terrifying deterioration of the status of human rights in the Arab world. It shows the extent of persecution that human rights organizations and activists are exposed to, in view of exile as the appropriate alternative for continuing activity.

As this is a new topic of discussion, this humble participation will, in the best of cases, be a basis for a deeper and more comprehensive dialogue. Such a discussion must take place in the context of a study of the phenomenon, and an objective evaluation. Until now, no organization working in exile has undertaken observation of its experience so as to facilitate its study and evaluation. The whirlwind of daily work, and its monopolization of activists' time, does not permit the time necessary for this kind of activity. This is considered a disgrace to the Arab human rights movement.

Organizations and Foundations working in Exile:

Although many organizations and foundations working in exile were originally established within their native countries, they were later coerced, by force, harassment, constant persecution and even assassination, to transfer their activity abroad. An example of this is the Sudanese Organization, which was established in the Sudan in 1984 and forced to transfer its activity abroad in 1991. Also, there is the Committee for Defending Legal Rights, which was founded by Muhammad Al-Musaari in Saudi Arabia and then forced to continue its activity in London where it was compelled to take asylum. The Yemeni Organization for Defending

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[13] General Secretary of the Sudanese Human Rights Organization in Cairo

Human Rights and a number of Iraqi organizations are considered other examples of this.

The second type of organization is established abroad, either because its native country does not allow such activity, or because it is in a state of serious opposition and antagonism to the ruling regime and therefore its activists are unable to work within the country.
Examples of this include: the Bahrain Committee for Defending Human Rights (which works from Syria), the Bahrain Organization for Human Rights (which works from Copenhagen), a number of Libyan organizations such as the Libyan Human Rights League (founded in 1989), the Libyan Committee for Defending Democracy and Human Rights (founded in 1973), both of which work from Switzerland, and the Libyan Committee for Human Rights (founded in 1988) which works from the United States.

The third type of organization works secretly within its own country, and has a branch abroad that works as its public platform. An example of this is the Committee of Defending Democratic Freedoms and Human Rights in Syria, which had seventeen of its activists sentenced to prison in 1992.

The fourth type does not have organizations in the sense usually thought of, but rather their activists work within existing regional or international organizations such as the Arab Organization or groups of the Amnesty Organization or other international organizations. Many Iraqi, Syrian, and Tunisian activists have participated in this kind of activity in Germany, Austria, Britain, Canada, and France.

The fifth type is new and is represented by the transfer of some activists abroad due to increasing pressure and persecution. This step forms a preliminary provisionary procedure for transferring the activity abroad. It is a strong trend among Tunisians and has found acceptance among some of the Egyptian organizations and different opposition organizations.

The final type can be classified as a phenomenon of creating regional agglomerations in one center. An example of that is the Regional Arab League.

Activists in Exile:

Naturally, a presence in exile is a forced situation even when it is individually chosen, for it is a loathsome choice. Human rights activists in exile, without exception, are ostracized, persecuted, and some are

considered outlaws. The ruling powers of their countries describe them as agents, traitors, defectors, henchmen, and so on, and thus are observed by different security apparatuses.

The most prominent examples of persecution of activists are that of the disappearance of Mansour Al-Kakhia in 1993, and the assassination Al-Mahdi Bin Baraka, and the Imam Musa Al-Sadr. The worst kind is widespread persecution of imprisoned activists within their own countries, such as what the Sudanese and Syrian powers are doing.

In general, we are able to say that human rights activists in exile do not work in natural circumstances. Rather, they suffer from the harshness of exile and the loss of their homelands. They dream of returning without hope, and suffer from poverty and the worries of their families who seek stability in a place safe from the oppression of the ruling powers. In spite of all this, they insist on continuing to give, defending their rights and the rights of their compatriots.

Problematic and Work Mechanisms:

It goes without saying that organizations in exile use well-known work mechanisms, such as campaigns, reports, publications, cooperation with human rights networks and regional and international mechanisms, etc. However, the problematic that face human rights organizations in exile have a different nature, forced upon them by the reality of their existing outside of their native country. This often gives them a reasonable amount of freedom of movement, depending on the general freedoms allowed in the headquarter country.

Examples of such organizations include the Sudanese Organization, the Bahrain Organization for Defending Human Rights, and the Syrian Committee for Defending Human Rights. Four Arab organizations in exile enjoy membership in the Global Organization for Resisting Torture. It is ironic that the constitution of the Arab Organization for Human Rights, which enjoys the characteristic of being an observer in the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, does not permit membership to organizations in exile with the one exception of the Sudanese Human Rights Organization. Membership in organizations that are observers provides permission to attend meetings of the International Committee for Human Rights, and the African Committee for Human Rights and Peoples Rights and its specialized committees. In addition to that, they are permitted to discuss government reports and respond to them. The Sudanese Organization has succeeded in obtaining

consecutive convictions without interruption since 1992. This has had a positive effect on the status of human rights in the Sudan. However, the Arab presence in these meetings is unfortunately extremely weak, despite the abundance of meetings and opportunities to meet with nearly all of the activists and regional and global organizations, which gives an opportunity for an exchange of information and experience.

Generally, its is possible to say that existing in exile permits observation, documentation, and eventually publication of violations. This leads to an inversion of the status of human rights, and aids improvement of its conditions. However, this kind of activity stipulates the presence of a reasonable amount of internal cohesion organizationally, ideally, and in practice. The rọle of organizations in exile, despite their importance, cannot be an alternative to activity within the homeland. Some organizations have succeeded in linking the homeland with activity abroad.

Existing in exile is an instance of coercion and arises from an objective necessity. It is an exceptional circumstance and not a general rule. Therefore it is possible to discuss its positive and negative aspects:

Negative Aspects:

- Organizations in exile are more exposed to political struggles, or, in reality, they are prisoners of them. Most of them are founded through political opposition forces.
- A presence abroad does not aid transforming the human rights movement into popular consciousness and sentiments.
- A lack of internal cohesion may lead to a detachment from reality.
- The fact that most activists are refugees may deepen the problematic of professionalism and volunteerism, especially due to poverty.
- Influence from global human rights discourse that is not culturally specific does not aid the crystallization of a legal discourse that will affect reality in the future.
- Opposition and open arguing with the political regime increases greatly. This in turn leaves the arena of influence on the superstructure solely to the regimes' discourse.
- Foreign financing, if not dealt with high sensitivity, will lead to a form of domination and silent, inconspicuous power. This makes activity more related to working for a living.

Positive Aspects:

- A presence in exile aids intellectual development for activists and allows them to gain great experience through the sophisticated jobs they undertake in a number of global and regional organizations and associations. Thus the human rights movement generally benefits in the future.
- The theoretical participation of activists will in the future provide a good base for establishing a just legal movement.
- Life abroad provides an opportunity for speedy connections with information and different networks. This provides a great deal of early prevention as a result of strict observation of the means of communication in most countries.

Conclusion:

Organizations and activists in exile are found in every corner of the world. They are active in different measures and organize themselves in various forms. They are connected to a reality different from their own, and strive to extend bridges between them and their reality. They suffer from personal problems and carry with them the state and illnesses of their societies. They succeed at times and are paralyzed others, however their experiences remain in need of observation and study so as to extract the results which may the future of the Arab human rights movement, if this naming is permitted. The human rights movement needs a stronger connection to social reality, a reforming of itself and a definition of the framework of its interrelations and relations with its society and the ruling powers in Arab societies.

Chapter 3

Towards a real mechanism for human rights activists` protection

Field Work in Human Rights: Norms and Obstacles

[14] By: Abdelrahman Ben Amro

The Concept of Field Work in Human Rights:

I mean by fieldwork in human rights the processes of palpable investigation performed by rights authorities and jurists in order to establish events of abuse against human rights and the identity of the perpetrator. Investigation should establish date, place and circumstances of the crime. It should gather all evidence to that end in order to join it with the results of proper and competent investigations to publicize and punish crimes. It should be used to call for interrogations. Investigations should mobilize and exhort, and be accomplished with competent rights and juridical organizations internally and externally.

The Source of Abuses as Object of Field Investigation:

Information relating to an abuse can be gathered from any direct or indirect source, public or secret, e.g. sources of grievances resulting from abuses, all written, oral or visual media recorded internally or externally. Moreover, abuses can be reliably documented using x-rays, sensors and other such.

Investigative Means, Litigation, and Investigation to Establish Abuses:

It is not enough to know of an abuse. It is incumbent upon us to establish occurrences, identity of the perpetrator, accessories and the circumstances of the abuse...

The importance of establish occurrences of an abuse and the circumstances surrounding it has several bases:

Garnering corroboration from rights and other interested organizations;
If an abuse turns out to have not occurred after it was dealt with, the investigative body loses credibility in the future. This credibility is indispensable in order to impact and mobilize internal and external public opinion;
Charging a person or official office with an abuse before preparing evidence of how and who committed the crime can damage legal standing

[14] President of Morocco Association for human rights

if the abuse was not properly corroborated by evidence beforehand. Slander is punishable by law.

Some Means to Gather Evidence and Reliable Documentation on an Abuse and its Perpetrator:

Listening to the victim during a verbal process that is documented and signed to prevent future retraction under duress or temptation. This should include handing over documents and photocopying them (medical check, photographs, etc.)
Listening to witnesses to the abuse and documenting their testimony in a verbal process that they sign for the above reasons.
In the event of opening an investigation or judicial inquiry on the abuse: depending on circumstances, attempt to obtain accomplished verbal processes in similar cases.
Gather potent, complementary and interconnected evidence substantiated the abuse and who perpetrated it.
Gather reliable and various evidence, including for example press testimony (internal and external), means of threats that could have been made against the victim before the crime, etc. Also, gather evidence on the type of political, critical or social activity of the victim, and explore leads of possible enemies in official and non-official agencies.

Any evidence on the fate of kidnapping victims must be garnered and alternative means of doing so must be explored in light of particular difficulties that such cases impose. We will speak to the difficulties and obstacles to field work in human rights in a moment, content yourselves now with an introduction to documenting kidnapping.

Prove the occurrence of a kidnapping, the identity of the victim, his/her circumstances by listening to the victim's family, neighbors and – if relevant – those who were with him in the event of a public kidnapping.
Proving the identity of the kidnappers, the place of the kidnapping and the fate of the victim can be accomplished by listening to the victim after release or, if unreleased, listening to other victims that were released who can describe the detention site.

If it is necessary to prove other abuses affecting the right to life or personal security, then other processes are necessary. Here are some examples of such abuses:

Examples of abuses affecting the right to life: death while in police custody, or while detained in prison as a result of physical or mental

torture, or as a result of poisoning or harm; also, assassinations in public places by gun, blows, violent injury or injury to sensitive locations.
Examples of abuses to the right of personal security: physical or mental torture during detention or arrest in police departments or official buildings...

Corroborating violations of the right to life and personal security can be done by listening to the victim if still alive, or to witnesses present during perpetration. Additionally, postmortem and other forensic techniques can be used. If an investigation has been opened, then photocopies of verbal processes can be made and their suitability considered.
The same curriculum can be followed to gather evidence and documentation relating to violent, dogmatic beliefs.

As for gathering evidence of civil rights abuse: First, some examples of such rights: freedom of thought, assembly, and religion; freedom of opinion, expression and movement; freedom to affiliate with societies, groups, parties or syndicates; right to participate in public life and peaceful demonstrations; the right to strike; the right to form a family; and equality between both spouses and between men and women. Evidence should be gathered by considering particulars, the testimony of victims and witnesses, and by reviewing complaints and public statements. Officials and concerned persons can be written in order to identify all sides of the issue. Verbal processes, reports, orders and judicial rulings resulting from disputes relating to these rights should be reviewed in order to ascertain if laws and regulations are in keeping with international treaties on human rights.

In order to document abuses on the right to a fair criminal trial, especially for political, rights and syndicate activists: attendance at trial in order to verify whether it followed principles of a fair trial as stipulated in article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and in standing laws, or is in keeping with international human rights agreements. Does the court respond to defense motions or not? Does it hold public trials? Is there a police present within or outside the court? Are witnesses listened to? Was there forensic research into torture or the incidents at hand? Can the ruling be appealed? And so on.

Identify whether there is respect for participation in public life by way of following abuses in this regard. Consider journals, public statements, and grievances and then identify their soundness by investigation and listening to victims. Write officials and be informed of their opinions. Analyze the conclusions.

Verify respect for the will of the people when they practice their rights when seeking counsel or voting in local, professional or legislative elections and review election regulations. Are there nominations from a list based on cities or defined villages? Verify inhabitants of the addresses on ballots.

Verify the soundness of the election process by attending meetings and election rallies. Consider printed materials and posters. Follow up on how official media treats different internal political powers in the field. Is treatment neutral or against a certain party or parties? Follow up on how oversight authorities work. Is work neutral or prejudiced to one or more sides? Following elections requires attendance and consideration of election procedures and processes starting from the formation of voting booths and their competency to receive votes during set dates and times. Understand the process of voting and its completion when the election results are announced and all disputes resolved. Following up requires such things as the following: familiarity with identity and interests of members constituting voting booths and their prior experiences in order to guarantee neutrality.

Confirm the presence or lack of oversight officials representing different candidates in ballot booths. Take their names. If there are none present, then determine if that is because of personal reasons or because of official compulsion.

Confirm the period of time set for elections and for individual booths and ballots. Confirm if this complies with electoral and local laws. Does this last preserve all necessary guarantees for free and fair elections?

Observe the electoral process in order to confirm the preservation of all local, legal conditions and guarantees found in democratic nations.

This, for example, would include: the name of the voter on the ballot, the presence of a voter I.D., validation of voter identity and review of voter's official papers, marking the voter's name on the ballot after verifying the last, and allotting the voter the allowed time to complete the ballot and drop it into the box. Lastly, the cover should be returned and placed in the box prepared for it...

Follow up on the counting process, its statistical results and the announcement of the final results. Verify if guarantees of safe and sound elections were preserved from a legal standpoint on the local and international democratic level.

Make sure that elections are followed up in all its stages. Gather press and media testimony. Analyze and investigate their assertions of abuse. Analysis and investigation should be by way of what we discussed above and by way of listening to different voters and candidates. It should be by

way of reviewing ballots before and after they are used, and reviewing accessible election posts with an eye to the presence of oversight officials representing different candidates. Some should be questioned about the possibility of abuses during the voting process.
It is upon certain rights and juridical organizations to release a report after gathering and analyzing information and abuses that took place during and before the elections. The report should speak to public opinion and include all abuses, evidence and appeals for compliance to international treaties on the rights of peoples and self-determination.

Means of Gathering Evidence of Social and Cultural Abuse

I mean by social rights those rights that satisfy the social needs of citizens. Cultural rights are those that satisfy the thinking needs of society.
We find a definition and organization of social rights in constitutions and local laws on the internal level, and in international human rights agreements on the external level. By way of example: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights and in conventions signed in the International Labor Organization (ILO)...
Examples of social rights: the right to work; the right to protection from unemployment; the right to equality and a fair opportunity to work and be paid enough to live and raise a family in human dignity; the right to free time and relaxation; the right to reasonable limitations on work hours and paid vacations; the right of everyone to a decent standard of living; the right to provision for health, burial, and family; the right to food, clothing, shelter, medical check-ups and basic social services; the right to social security in times of unemployment, sickness, infirmity, age or so on in terms of involuntary loss of livelihood; and the right to motherhood and childhood as requiring special care.
Some examples of cultural rights: the right to education; the right of everyone to participate in cultural life and observe arts and various sources of knowledge; the right to invent and contribute to scientific advancement; and the right to derive benefit therefrom.
Fieldwork establishes the extent of respect for social and cultural rights. Some different types of abuses that can be encountered include by way of example:
Gather information relating to abuses from different media and press sources, as well as various research, reports, studies and public statements made by social, political,.. bodies. Analyze and investigate them by listening to victims and the agencies that organize them. Also listen to responses of organizations and the accused.

Review disputes relating to abuses brought before the judiciary to understand their weight, type and the rulings they cause.
Follow the same curriculum when gathering evidence of abuse on special rights like the rights of women, children, and the environment. Special attention to environmental rights...

Instruments of Human Rights Field Work

I mean by instrument: the standard that we measure something by.
Following upon that, I mean by instruments of human rights fieldwork as a type of standard we measure abuses damaging human rights by.
I mean by human rights those rights stipulated in international human rights agreements issued by the United Nations or its subsidiary bodies. I mean those rights organized by local law headed by the constitution, so long as they do not contravene international human rights agreements.
As a result of this, we measure abuse and its gravity by local and international texts and principles that organize and protect these rights.
The field researcher gathers and verifies evidence of abuse against rights as stipulated by texts of international and protective agreements. By way of example:
Field investigation of abuses against the right to life has access to the following instruments: article 2 of the UDHR stipulates the right of everyone to life. Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and its Second Optional Protocol prohibits the death penalty. This is also by decision of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) dated 25/5/1984 on guaranteeing rights of those who face the death penalty and based upon local criminal law that penalizes murder...

Field investigation is into abuses against personal security, defined as kidnapping; torture; violence; arbitrary detention; all manner of blows; cruel, dehumanizing or unusual punishment. All of these are the priority of the field investigator, who has the following instruments at his/her disposal:

UN General Assembly (GA) [Statement on the Protection of Persons from Forced Disappearance], dated 12/2/1993;
Articles of the local criminal code that penalizes kidnapping;
The Declaration on Protection of All People from Torture, Physical Violence, or Cruel, Dehumanizing or Unjust Punishment by the convention of the same name;
Article 5 of the UDHR that prohibits torture or cruel, dehumanizing or unjust treatment, and article 7 of the ICCPR that does the same;
Articles of the local criminal code that punish torture and violence;

Article 9 of the UDHR that prohibits arrest or detention arbitrarily. Article 9 of the UCCPR does the same. Constitutional articles and local criminal codes often do the same;
Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Authorities According to Law, approved by the Eighth Conference on the Protection from Crime convened in Havana beginning on 27 September 1990;
The Group of Principles on the Protection of All Peoples Subjected to All Forms of Arrest or Detention, approved by the GA in its 76th session 9/12/1988...

The field researcher can use the following instruments when investigating abuses against political rights:

Article 21 of the UDHR that stipulates the right of everyone to public administration of his country, whether directly or through representatives chosen freely. It states that everyone has an equal right to seek office. It also states that the will of the people is the basis of authority and that the will of the people becomes known through fair and periodic elections, wherein voters are equal, ballots are secret and the guarantees of fair elections are upheld.
Article 25 of the ICCPR states the same as article 21 of the UDHR.
Constitutional articles on political rights...
Local laws organizing elections and public administration offices.

Field investigation into abuses against social rights can take advantage of the following instruments, for example:

Articles 16 and 22-25 of the UDHR; these are the articles relating to protection of the family, right to social guarantees, e.g. work, fair pay, protection from unemployment, right to establish and be affiliated with a union; right to vacation and free time; defined and reasonable work hours; right to a dignified standard of living; right to enough good food and clothing; right of refugees to be given shelter; and social security during unemployment, old age, disease, incapacity, etc.
The Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, i.e. articles 1 through 12 that repeat much of what the UDHR covered.
Conventions and recommendations of the ILO...
The constitution and local laws that organize labor, social guarantees, health and habitation, transportation, the personal statute, etc.

Field investigation gathering evidence of abuses affecting cultural rights can take advantage of the following instruments:

Articles 26 and 27 of the UDHR on basic guarantees like the right to education, participation in social cultural life, observe artistic performances, and contribute to scientific progress, ...
Articles 13-15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESC) that includes as basic rights the right to education and culture...
The constitution and local laws organizing education and culture insofar, as they do not contravene international laws.

Investigation into abuses of special rights like the rights of women, children, handicapped and the right to a safe environment can utilize, gather and review international and local agreements protecting these rights...

Obstacles to Human Rights Field Work:

Obstacles to human rights fieldwork appears especially in countries where the will of the people does not hold sway, i.e. democracy does not govern. Such democracy would include:

The right of people to self-determination through elected representatives through free, fair and periodic elections within a democratic constitutional framework.
The right of people to practice freedoms of opinion and expression in all their forms and across different local channels, including societies; private and public meetings; the founding of political organizations, unions, and clubs; and the right to join them.
The right of people to oversight, accountability and the questioning of their chosen rulers in a democratic fashion, through elected representatives in parliamentary, local or professional bodies.
The rule of law for everyone, regardless of political, governing, economic or social center.
The presence of an independent, free and impartial judiciary that bravely carries out its mission to distribute justice, punish tyranny and compensate the oppressed.

The lack of a popular will that produces democratic change cannot but produce an individualistic, oppressive political system with control over legislative, executive and judicial authority. Such a system continues even if a constitution is promulgated, for it can be revoked at will. Authority is gathered within one pair of hands. There are elected institutions, but elections are rigged, planned and foreordained. If the constitution

organizes an independent judiciary, the practical reality, even the laws, differ.

In these countries that so rule over their political, economic, social and cultural organization, oppressed by individualistic political organizations, which include – with some variation – all Arab nations, we find that we are in need of internal rights work. These nations need rights organizations and unity in agitating for rights. These are the nations full of obstacles to human rights fieldwork. As for democratic nations, they do not need rights organizations within their borders. Whenever such organizations arise, they become interested in defending rights outside their borders. That is because of not only the poverty of human rights abuses within these countries, but also because of the poverty of their number; big and small, abuses are quickly and orderly dealt with justice, disinterest, and civility. This is true before the independent, competent and impartial judiciary and also before public opinion as embodied by official and unofficial media. Whatever causes such organizations to appear is unjustified or of little importance.

The question before us is the obstacles to human rights field work in the undemocratic world. How can we not include Arab nations?

There are two types of obstacles: objective and personal. Each positively and negatively affects the other.

Objective Obstacles:

Objective obstacles blocking human rights field work in democratic Arab nations:

First: Legal Obstacles

Often, serious human rights abuses befalling undemocratic nations are perpetrated by officials, their aids, and their appointees on national and local levels. They place themselves above the law, protecting themselves with immunities from investigation, inquiry, following-up, or trial. At the very least, they place obstacles in the path of justice by imposing impossible preconditions or by necessitating agreement from the executive, judiciary or both together. Sometimes investigation will continue indefinitely as there is no legal limitation on the termination of inquiries.

Legal obstacles do not block the subsidiary bodies of justice (judicial police, public prosecution, investigating magistrates, court judges), but

block field work or organizations that aim to investigate and prove human rights abuses by officials or other persons.

Some examples of legal obstacles: blocking the opening of an investigation or legal inquiry into an official or necessitating permission of a high judicial body in order to begin investigation, wherein that body is open to pressure and decisions are not open to appeal.

Some examples of legal obstacles to human rights organizations that conduct field work:

Preventing the foundation of rights organizations without permission, granted upon impossible preconditions; granting charters only upon agreement of an official licensing body that is not obligated to explain rejections or explains rejections in vague generalizations of public security and order. Permits are denied based upon considerations of organizations as affecting political or public order, or challenging sacred dogma. Such labels are used against organizations or individuals how have participated in any political, union or social activity. Often it is because of positions or opinions that are protected by international human rights agreements.

Obstacles that may appear during human rights field work:

Most of the time, authorities do not respond – including the judiciary – to the correspondence of rights organizations addressing abuses. This is especially true when administrative authorities are charged... Should a response be forthcoming, it is negative, denies the existence of the abuse or disavows knowledge of the incident. Sometimes claims are made that information cannot be made public legally (investigative confidentiality, welfare of the state, professional confidentiality). Sometimes officials claim that rights organizations do not have the proper legal status to receive such information.

Some officials in some nations have considered field investigations into abuses and accusations made to individuals an usurpation of judicial power and, therefore, a challenge to the public order, a security threat and detriment to public order. Rights workers and organizations are charged and tried...

Second: Financial Obstacles:

Most rights organizations, although not all, work in undemocratic nations complain of the poverty of financial sources...

This poverty is a result of a number of causes. Some of these: fewness of financial opportunities for members; official obstruction to financial support or linking support to conditions impossible to comply with without compromising independence; terrorizing and threatening sympathizers as a result of financial support; legal prohibition against foreign funding of non-governmental organizations...

This leads to a number of related obstacles such as: the inability to secure a headquarters, materials, communications equipment, media, printers, transport, or any other costs necessary to carry out field investigations.

Personal Obstacles:

Some personal obstacles that can affect human rights field workers:

First: Fear of civil and criminal consequences of investigation, whether by inspectors or others who may run investigations into them...

Second: Weakness of theoretical and practical juridical foundation in the human rights field...

Third: Spread of illiteracy and weak rights consciousness among most citizens that weakens cooperation with field researchers during investigations into abuses.

Fourth: Weakness of rights work unity between different social sectors in general and between rights organizations specifically, i.e. cooperation in fact finding and proving abuses against human rights and exploring civil, political, economic, social and cultural factors...

The dismantling of objective and personal obstacles is the mission of all sectors of civil society, who must work to build a state constructed of law and right.

Foreign Funding: Necessities and Problems

[15]By: Gamal El Din El Adimi

I was asked to present a paper on funding problems facing non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and other organizations interested in the field. The Arab situation does not differ much from one area to another in terms of preoccupations and difficulties facing work outside of the government umbrella. I will focus on this issue, drawing from my life experience in working with an organization interested in human rights and civil work in Yemen. I have an experience that touched on this issue while working with an international foundation – an experience that greatly helped me understand reasons and policies of international organizations and governments interested in supporting the charitable sector for one reason or another.

Be that as it is, this paper will speak to funding problems of human rights organizations particularly, and NGO's in general. Within this context, it is important to draw attention to the work of NGO's in Yemen that is still in a state of founding. It is a new experiment and the country has no previous knowledge of human rights work.

The country was divided in two for many years. It was unaware of anything we would refer to as an NGO, There were some organizations, but these were concerned with cooperative, charitable work. NGO's and foundations did not appear until after May 1990.

Unions and existing political organizations prevented social work. When an organization was allowed to form, other political bodies would deny it that right. The state and parties vied secretly for power over it and would express all circumstances as political threats.

Since 22 May 1990 Yemen has witnessed a leap in political work and NGO's. Political parties, societies and unions have been allowed to form. The first four years of the new state were the most active, followed by a limited decline in the number of parties and NGO's because of the Summer 1994 war. A part of these depended on competition and political polarization within the government owing to a heterogeneous coalition of the General Popular Conference, with conservative leanings, and the Socialist Party, with leftist ones.

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[15] Yemeni human rights activist and manager of Yemeni coalition for civil society

For this reason, human rights and, more generally, political work faced many difficulties that led to the fall of many organizations and parties. Even now, societies and organizations that we could number among those interested in human rights cases would not exceed the fingers on a single hand. Their activities have also shrunk, and most are limited to issuing press releases and operating small activities.

This simple introduction to NGO work in Yemen and its linked issues will speak to some of the difficulties of social work and the performance of a required role. The difficulties are double that of other Arab nations. Government difficulties combine with social and cultural realities that view Western governments and organizations as having conceived human rights as a culture rooted in the West. I will finish with the issue of funding, threats and policies that support this idea.

The Necessity of Funding

The problem of local financial support for programs and activities of rights organizations is not the only one, but also the weakness and decline of external support. These are some of the greatest challenges to NGO's. This is not because of a lack of project proposals, but is owing to particular policies from officials, themselves.

There is a lack of an average rights or legal mentality – to such an extent that such activity is considered a socio-cultural phenomenon, a great difficulty. Many local citizens are prevented from offering financial or other support to NGO's except if it follows one of the parties, wherein the party takes control of the finances and execution of programs. Most of the time, parties take control of the reins and the wealth, reducing the NGO to its service.

The need for foreign support brings other problems beyond simply the material. Political pressure and undue attention like in some cases of great interest – even if the government did not officially recognize them as such. We can give two examples. One, when a women's education and rights program was cancelled, the issue was treated with a strange silence by parties, organizations and people. The funding agencies took action and brought a complaint against the decision to the highest levels. The insistence threatened to stop a great many projects relying on foreign funding. Did we really need someone to put more obstacles in the way of human rights and liberty?!

The second example is of the judiciary and its offices. It is an important issue and object of repeated complaints from all sides of Yemeni society. Corruption within the judiciary is rife; it is backward and unable to fulfill its duties. Foreign funding agencies have begun taking interest in the sector and publicizing the importance of reforming it. They have budgeted huge sums for Yemen to aid it in this regard.

Well, did we really need anyone to tell us that? And how are we to work to reform the judiciary without a guarantee of funding agencies' agenda?! A simple question I put to you in this paper that seeks to cast light on the issues linked to foreign funding, negative and positive.

I add to this that popular culture has been imbued with the idea that protection by force, tribal justice, executive agents of the government and the military are the guarantors of lifting injustice. This is instead of recourse to protection for abused rights agencies. This testifies to the absence of a real role for the judiciary. All this has made it exceedingly difficult to convince those that can – whatever slogans or programs say – to take a role in the protection of human rights and liberties.

This is not limited to human rights work alone, but extends to political parties concerned with the same problem. They are also powerful representatives of public opinion within the country.

First and foremost: these ideas are firmly embedded into Arab peoples. They weaken preparedness to stop, support or fund social and human rights organizations. It does not mean that everyday troubles are in fact exterior, imported. Rather, it testifies to a loss of profit or gain from citizen attempts to oppose or support opposition to the government.

In my estimation, existing organizations have not realized what was desired of them. The role they fulfill is still within a tight, piecemeal framework. They have not been able to cement a region to do work across the nation into different regions – the countryside, for example. These are the places that human rights protection programs are completely absent from. Traditional societies contain traditions and beliefs in contradiction to human rights. Such primitive traditions that hold such sway are based on ideas that often violate Islamic principles, which preserve rights and liberties and seeks a culture of equality.

Focusing work on these traditional societies is what can bring about a true republican focus of NGO's. They can then affect decision-making,

pressure toward development, and place people under the protection of human rights and its liberties.

Human rights NGO's are limited instruments by their nature. They cannot alone play that republican role that we hope for them without securing real resources that allow them to extend. Only by securing these resources and efficacy can republican organizations carry out programs in all places, discuss problems, and try to raise consciousness enough to defend rights and liberties. This consciousness will help to readjust itself and take a positive aspect. Civil society will become a force facing rights abusers instead of surrender to weakness and toleration of the status quo. The transformation is occurring gradually, forming into a civil society that flees from superstitions and acceptance of tribal rules and rulership.

Problems of Foreign Funding

As I pointed to earlier, the problem of human rights organizations and civil institutions in Yemen is the weakness of foreign funding and the absence of local funding initiatives. This is in addition to popular culture and the public policies of authorities toward such civil support. The difficulties are doubled, and human rights workers give meaning to the Arabic expression "as one who jumps out of the frying pan into the fire".

Many governmental and international non-governmental funding agencies run programs within a certain framework or specialized field. Funding organizations limit the number of beneficiary nations able to receive funding according to reasons or special standards. This is owing to situations or to bring about certain political impacts in each country. This is especially true in our Arab region. It makes NGO's consider projects and programs to fund them. The opposite is true: whenever the international political impact of a country ebbs, so does funding interest.

It appears to me that Yemen is far from the hot seat of the Middle East and this has damaged the size and nature of funding that NGO's have received. Add to that: if Yemen had the power to greatly affect the surrounding region, it would weigh greatly in its favor. The surrounding petroleum nations need no funding for human rights programs, which aren't even there to begin with. The nature of ruling organizations and Western agencies found in them has offered these nations great protection and international isolation. It has prevented the nascent experiment in the south of the Arabian Peninsula from growing. It is made it weaker, stripped it of political impact that would have made it interesting or brought it international funds.

Limitations on this experiment, its lack of presence, and the absence of a social work idea within the nation have weakened the movement and exposed it to continuous division. The lack of transparency has cast a long shadow of doubt over the nature of funding and its goals. The field has become susceptible to accusations of human rights workers personally profiting from aid funds, or their workers, or by kickbacks to donor agencies. This has met fertile ground in the minds of many whose minds have been stamped with adversarial images of Western nations from which grow huge funding agencies. That was supported by a number of Western organizations with political agendas contradicting human rights in Arab nations.

When such organizations take exception to an Arab nation under pretense of human rights abuses, we find them supporting purposefully other organizations that practice worse human rights abuses. The interest in human rights is sincere, but it is not a chief priority in the interests of states. Interest turns to direct security, economic, or trade benefits or so on.

The Southern Hemisphere is generally weak compared to the North – and we Arab nations are part of this region. The idea has taken root among people and learned alike that all organizations, whether they call for violence or abstain from it, are pawns of Western organizations. The problem is not foreign funding, however, but its kind. Is funding conditional or focused? This is the core of the matter. From my humble experience in working with such funding agencies, most funding is unconditional, even if limited.

Add to that: the financial factors are not the most important to human rights organizations. Lack of financial guarantees can jeopardize projects and the capacity for work. herein lies the importance of foreign funding. It allows organizations to access resources and guarantee the continuation of work. It frees up organizations from social or local political pressure, guaranteeing independence in the course of rights work. Foreign funding is a necessity because of the total lack of local funds. The lack of enough funds in itself makes it so. It is an objective matter.

The social reaction of the foreign funding question has been rife with doubt, rejection and attacks on human rights. They find as a basis of argument foreign workers and foreign donors as a trade-off for the use of human rights as a foreign tool to pressure our nation, to bend it to economic threats to our welfare.

there are other factors relating to negative side effects of funding on the practical and financial levels of donor organizations. Basically, foreign agencies change priorities from time to time.

This can suddenly cut off funding to some organizations and cause them to look elsewhere for sources, changing program plans. There is no recourse to internal support for the goals or programs of NGO's. This is especially difficult when NGO's perceive themselves as non-political, but average citizens consider monitoring abuses the realm of political rights and, therefore, a party to politics. This occurs in our nation. All this and still many citizens' political rights are continually abused.

We cannot but say that foreign interference into the decisions and directions of NGO's need not be direct but gradual. For that reason, NGO's should exercise caution in receiving foreign moneys of any kind. They must compare the goals of the donor with those of the program to be funded. They must consider the future and potential for work should aid be cut off suddenly and another source cannot be found. This can only be realized from the benefit of experience in funding cases themselves. It will continue to be an issue for the foreseeable future.

Rights and social organizations generally call for awareness of their work to build civil society. They must pursue funding within their nations, which will not occur except under the presence of laws that allow receipt of citizen donations, or indeed encourage them to do so. As soon as national funding sources, under clearly defined legal protection, can donate funds toward the goals of NGO's without danger, then they will do so. This would render activist organizations' need to look for foreign funding redundant.

However, most funds come from international NGO's – perhaps it is still like this – that have opposition stances to their own governments. These organizations do not extend support only, but also further programs, opinions and support to rights and liberties. They normally have a specific and defined vision of what is to become of these issues. It is important that there be a balanced local awareness of NGO funding policies, in addition to prohibitions against interference in project development. There should always be an ability to assess donor organizations, study their documents and know if they are funding agencies alone, are interested in other situations covered by human rights NGO's, or if their goals only require a local activist mask.

A final point, if I can be forgiven, relating to historical and economic circumstances and conditions the Arab region passed through: most governments continue to rely on foreign aid in their budgets. These governments cannot claim aid is free from pressures or conditions in economic or political affairs. Rather international governmental institutions tie aid to government projects, economic or social policies, or particular political situations. Programs of the World Bank or International Monetary fund come quickly to mind, for example. No one doubts the nationalism of these organizations and their imposition of external controls. But governments have found recourse to them and strengthened their bargaining position with donor institutions because of opposition to civil society institutions. Within programs, they pressure public opinion in order to lighten conditions and requirements.

Legal Problems

The principle problem begins within the laws organizing NGO's, or the lack thereof. If there are laws, then they warn against NGO's or at least threaten their funding (especially foreign) prospects. If there are no laws, this is perhaps worse. The issue of foreign funding does not always benefit from a legal principle deciding that permission is granted unless otherwise prohibited by legal text. Rather, the issue can become politicized or criminalized without a text, as has recently happened in Egypt against the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights.

By way of example, the Yemeni Organizations Law no. 11 of 1963 makes acceptance of foreign funds subject to official approval:

First: As for acceptance of foreign funds: this law prohibited receipt of such funds from any official or unofficial foreign agency except by permission from an administrative official of the "Social Affairs Ministry" according to article 21.

Secondly: As for accepting donations from the public on the internal Yemeni level: the law prohibited this except in compliance with conditions set forth in the implementing regulations. But since 1963, no such regulations have been issued, meaning that no donations nor internal funding can be accepted. The law gives the Social Affairs Ministry the right to add any conditions on any particular case...if it is warranted (article 22).

The law punishes all donations accepted as an infraction against the law, i.e. confiscation of the moneys (article 45). It punishes the responsible

officer with detention of not more than six months and a fine of not more than 300 rials, or by one of the two (article 45). The law stipulates, "In all cases, more severe penalties from another law or the Penal Code may be applied." (article 49).

After this article on funding, we turn to another article in the Organizations Law that prevents any organization from affiliating, joining or participating with any organization, body or club which is headquartered outside of Yemen before notifying the competent authority of this; it is right of the latter to deny this (article 21).

The article does not prevent funding but prevents meeting at global and regional conferences, establishing networks, or casts doubts upon organizations in the course of defending substantive cases.

As for NGO's that work in human rights and the like, there is no law to organize them in Yemen. The Organizations Law does not apply. Therefore, the issue of funding is subject to official approval under the Culture Ministry, as it grants licenses to these organizations. The result is the potential to prohibit the right to receive external funding. Officials tend to consider the Organizations Law as a general text that covers a legal loophole. Or, whether a law exists or not, authorities can prevent or permit funding. Civil society organizations become a plaything in the hands of authorities. Also, the penalties can always be applied.

As for the Algerian law on organizations no. 9 of 4 December 1990, it prevents Algerian organizations from accepting gifts or advice from foreign organizations or bodies except upon agreement of the competent public authority. This makes the public authority the master of decree and counsel over organizations, able to decide their right to receive gifts and counsel or negate it. Thus organizations lose one of their basic rights.

The Egyptian law on NGO's no. 153 of 1999 promulgated 27 May 1999 does not allow any organization to receive funds from abroad except, whether Egyptian, foreign, foreign official or the representative of such within Egypt, except by permission from the minister of social affairs (article 17).

The same article prevents Egyptian organizations from sending money to people or organizations abroad (article 17). It punishes this by detention for not more than six months and a fine of not more than 2,000 pounds on anyone who undertook the aforementioned acts (article 11, paragraph C).

The Basic Limit:

Is the question the basic limits of the independence of NGO's?

In a meeting recently held with a number of civil society organizations working in the human rights field in Cambodia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Sri Lanka, the participants affirmed in their closing statement that general international law principles require limitations on the freedom of organizations. But these must be essential limitations to any democratic society. NGO's must be granted a number of rights and liberties. Paragraph 9 of the statement said: "...obtaining moneys and looking for aid without hindrance, and neither should acceptance of financial help or any other aid of any kind from foreign or local sources be impeded."

The workshop on "Development Framework for Organizations in the Arab Nation" held in Jordan 27-28 June 1999 released a statement on the principles and instruments on the freedom of organizations in Arab nations. Point 13 affirms that "it is the right of organizations to develop financial resources including donations and dues of members, acceptance of gifts, grants, or aid from any natural person or local or foreign body. Likewise it is their right to undertake activity in this regard in order to gain revenue or reap profit for the use of its activities provided it does not distribute profits to its members.

Point 14 calls upon Arab nations to incorporate laws that free organizations from taxes or duties, and that encourage donors by discounting what they freely donate from their taxes owed by an acceptable rate. Also, it is necessary that tax exemptions do not become a means to affect the affairs of the organizations.

As for the UN Declaration Protecting Human Rights Defenders that was approved by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1998, it confirmed that "Everyone – alone or in conjunction with others – has the right to access, receive and use resources as is befitting reinforcement or protection of human rights and basic liberties, by peaceful means...(article 13).

I would like to turn now to a network of community organizations in Palestine and the issue of funding effects on their work and independent decision-making.

The think of eight NGO's in Palestine that came together, worried by foreign funding issues. Funding has a positive impact on support and continuation of NGO's and their participation in development, i.e. plans, programs, employment of special cadres. Cooperative initiatives declined as a result of a declining standard of living. The leaders of these organizations realized that without funding community organizations would cease all activity.

In spite of our discontent at this, the effectiveness of the organizations would be greatly affected should their funded programs be confined to members and local sources that do not enjoy the encouragement of the government, but invoke its wrath. How can rights organizations confront the machinations of state? It has its capabilities, resources and people and can withdraw substantive and financial support from anyone able to give it.

As for the impact of funding on the independence of organizations, I turn to the variety of funding sources that allow community organizations a high degree of independence and varied activities. This does not preclude donor goals, but responsibility lies first and foremost upon the shoulders of NGO's to place limits on interference. Donors can sometimes impose conditions impacting the NGO's strategic ends, but to a large extent, donors are NGO's themselves and subscribe to similar goals and principles within general human rights.

I gather this all under the necessity to link funding with accountability and transparency – to establish obvious links between community organizations, popular sectors, and international funding agencies. The ultimate goal of all NGO workers is to procure self-funding sources. It is the immediate goal of all organizations, political formations and legal associations that face this issue. The harsh economic reality in Arab nations places self-funding sources far into the future.

I cannot emphasize enough that legislation and laws organizing NGO work must conform to the reality of their work. Activists should participate in drafting these laws because they are most able to speak to the problems and preoccupations in this living sector of Arab society.

A Fabricated Problem

Many human rights activists are surprised at the uproar around foreign funding. This is especially true of organizations that work in democratic development, human rights, and elections. These concerns do not arise

around other social, artistic or other such organizations that receive foreign funding. It is obvious that activist human rights organizations are the object of wrongful political threats and a superficial review of rights and liberties. The problem of foreign funding is a fabricated problem.

This funding seldom surpasses 1% of foreign aid to governments. In spite of this, civil society institutions are bound to submit annual reports on expenditures and receipts of funds. The donor organizations review the reports in detail more than once. However, as for the government agencies that point accusing fingers at NGO's, donor agencies can seldom get proper explanations of expenditures of foreign aid.

So, I am satisfied that it is our right – we as citizens of the Third World from the Southern Hemisphere – that we take back a little of the wealth plundered by the Northern First World. Especially if I can use this small amount in vital areas, indispensable, like rights and liberties.

Closing

I finish by saying there is no real harm in NGO's accepting funds for local programs whether the donor is foreign or domestic, especially in light of rapid developments of globalization and communications that have spilled over borders. This is conditional upon NGO's being aware of t
the following conditions:

1. Intransigence

Meaning if an NGO forms a certain program with a certain position vis-à-vis political and social issues, then it must not change that position according to the desires of a funding agency. It should not modify it to bring it into line with goals or inclinations of a funding organization, whatever the justification. Better to look for other donors and diversify resources to maintain independence.

2. Financial Transparency in Expenditure and Administration

NGO's must present a clear, transparent, and honorable image of the ways that it spent and administered money. This is required by publicizing funds received and how they were spent. This will reinforce available funds in the future and increase confidence in the NGO's programs and mission. Presenting different images of official agencies known for secrecy and suppression will lose an NGO popular support and public confidence.

It is ridiculous for NGO's to point accusing fingers at corruption and lack of transparency if they themselves are guilty of the same and unless absolutely necessary. There must be legal grounds for civil society organizations to work freely and effectively, wherein NGO's uses transparency for good so as to nip counterattacks in the bud. This is especially apropos because many Arab laws still prevent or restrict foreign funding.

3. FF

This requires comprehensive and continuing knowledge of funding sources, studying publications of donor organizations, and knowing their programs, goals and positions. This is so that local organizations are not damaged by affiliation with certain donor organizations, and relationships to certain, potentially damaging, agencies are avoided. Donors who take different positions or are not accepted by Arab citizens for one reason or another should be avoided, so as not to open the door to slander or attack. There should be no doubt of an NGO's trustworthiness, nationalism, or Arabism.

Improving Administrative Performance and Financial Drive of Human Rights Organizations

[16]By : Fadel Kademsi

We all understand the general missions before human rights organizations. From a wide perspective, the important goals that inform all activism can be summarized. They mean, at the very least, the defense of liberties for all people. Certain elements must be preserved in order to perform these missions at the required level.

The First Element: Independence.

Rights organizations cannot fulfill their duties without a decidedly independent structure. Part of this is the preservation of capable administrative drive. This means that its transparency and subjectivity must distinguish our work, more than others.

First point on volunteer and professional work:

How can the two coincide? Each of the two has its own benefits and detractions. Voluntary work is confined to work in undefined, theoretical action. It is a result of a lack of concentration, a result of the other interests that human rights organizations have. For these reasons, such organizations move slowly and do not respond to exigencies quickly. This leads to another detraction: lack of questioning validity of expression. The person that leaves work – leaves a calling – finds it hard to confront assumptions. At the end of the day, the person is a volunteer. A number of circumstances require professional work within organizations; they demand specialization, efficiency, and devotion.

The Second Point: There must be a balance between the big picture and details. Human rights organizations are basically interested in human rights, in the wide sense that includes many different missions. We all realize that the plethora of missions leads, often, to lack of preparedness or poor quality. This makes human rights organizational work inadequate to the broad sense of "economic, political, civil and social rights".

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[16] Member of Tunisian Society for Human Rights

The Second Element: Centralization of Control:

There are a number of organizations that misapply the idea of centralization. Centralization became individual discretion within human rights organizations and ignorance of group motivation. Centralization is truly the execution and success of discretion after counsel and discussion. That does not mean long discussions, protocols, or meetings with partial objectives. This strips authority of power and efficacy. We must be on the front line. We are human rights activists. Our rulers our not strangers – they are not from outside. They are from us. All of their detractions in realms of authority, oppression and individual struggle are products of our society as a whole. We are not innocent of them. We find that our organizations were founded, mostly, on administrative impetus. Founded on principles of presidency and personality. So much so that the organization does not convene meetings when the director is away. This is intimately tied with our dissatisfaction of moving beyond borders or developing instruments of group drive. This is the proof of presidency. We detract from our rulers and we do the same to them. It is as if the organization is private property, owned. This is a great defect of human rights activists. they must be distinguished by excellent morals far from individuality, control, and this old paradigm – to make ancestors holy. Organizations must contend with this unsound creation, a product of environment. As has often happened, personal and psychological issues of pride have exploded between human rights activists. How can we even change a part of the public's negative opinion of human rights activists if this is the case?!

Marginal conflicts reflect a moral crisis. I suppose it is from the great difficulties. Drive and institutional administration is not successful drive alone, it has a message that must be heard. How can we make this message be heard within the ancient confines of arbitrariness and dominion?

This crisis in the relations of activists and human rights organizations is a great responsibility because many of us work, each to a field, and we fit into a pseudo-division between old-time human rights practitioners and the new generation. As years go by, you may find yourself moving on for a change. To find a replacement is a difficulty resulting from the barrenness of internal drive within human rights organizations. This is the child of marginal and personal conflicts, wherein a successor was never prepared nor instilled with human rights values. Without fail, the leader is present for meetings, discussions, internal activity and world action. The rest of us have no opportunity to progress beyond appointee or observer in the field

of human rights. This means that the limitations imposed by authority on human right activists are limitations that we, ourselves, impose on young activists to stay them in their place.

The Third Element:

Human rights organizations are practically outside of the communication revolution because we do not exploit communications, nor do we know their true benefits. We do not see this in relations with authority, but throughout our own relationships and those within the organization. For example, the Tunisian League has 40 branches in which a press release is released after a month. We find that one of the branches asks why they stormed the house of Mr. Khamis Shemari. This means that media communication and news distribution is lost even within a single organization. And what about outside? How about internationally?

From this follows the importance of networks. This will be presented to the conference in detail.

The Fourth Element: Siege

All independent NGO's live in a state of siege that seeks their isolation and marginalization. This is because our rulers are uneasy with human rights activists. This is because they vaunt values far removed from actual fact and activists take these values and seek to bring them to the light of day. So began the siege of organizations in the name of national sovereignty. Siege was not just instituted in political spheres, but also in cultural and educational. The League had a discussion session denied on the insertion of human rights values into educational curricula. It was effectively and indirectly cancelled. This siege cripples organizational work; converting it without spreading, mutating its experience. Here we must stop this by developing Arab networks or international ones. In our opinion, this is the way to break the siege. Every activist in any country feels a deep-felt need of inclusion, quickly and organizationally. This is the great good of even organizations that do not possess the power to even defend themselves.

The fact is that we are in need of correcting our ways; deepening means to knowledge. Activists face abuses to rights of movement and in their work. The truth is that we must preserve for them some measure of world protection. We must campaign for inclusive, immediate and effective rights, for we are those who have become convinced of centuries of

examination. It is incumbent upon us at the end of the day to translate this experience into a positive reality better than what we have now.

We face a number of problems in motivation. We face lameness and inability. It is required that we overcome them all in an interconnected framework concerned with practical questions. If we succeed in establishing rapid-action instruments, then we have given much to human rights organizations and the knights of liberty everywhere.

Chapter 4

Arab Human Rights Movement Legalize and Frames of Work

Coordination and Competition in the Arab Human Rights Movement

[17]By: Khalil Abu Shamala

Firstly, I would like to express my high appreciation for the Arab Program for Human Rights Activists and the Moroccan Human Rights Organization for the brilliant efforts they have exerted towards the success of this conference. I believe this is not merely an opportunity for presenting working papers and recording recommendations, but rather, is a great opportunity for us all to meet in Morocco to interact and exchange information. It is also an opportunity to conclude cooperation agreements for reaching the noble goals we all know and strive to realize. We do so through cooperation with Arab society, which is assumed to be united not only theoretically but also in reality.

I offer sincere thanks to every participant, whether for attending or for working to convene this conference. It comes at a time important to us all, particularly as we are entering a new century. This context is leading us to deeply consider devising plans and work programs capable of facing the challenges of a new century in regards to respect for the Arab person, its value, and honor. The goal of such plans is the creation of a democratic Arab society led by the values of justice and equality.

I cannot forget to record my appreciation and respect for Dr. Haytham Manaa', the general supervisor of the conference who has exerted great efforts to defend Arab human rights. He supports human rights with his intellect, time, and experience, for the sake of a strong and cohesive movement capable of transforming words into actions, and theoretical issues into reality.

The title I shall address in this conference may appear random and coincidental. However, it is intentional on behalf of the colleagues in the Arab Program who conversed with me in their publication "Noshataa" on my stance towards coordination between Arab human rights organizations. I hope in the future to present a view that expresses a stance, which is not necessarily personal, as much as it is a representation of reality, and the state of Arab human rights organizations.

In the beginning, it is necessary to point out that the Arab human rights movement faces fundamental challenges that must be carefully calculated by activists and human rights organizations. This forces us to create plans and mechanisms for the basis of collective work security and the unification of media discourse. This must be done in accordance with

[17] Director of the Human Rights Consciousness Organization, Gaza, Palestine

the largely similar conditions found in all Arab countries. We must take into consideration that whatever may influence a human rights organization in one Arab country is reflected in one way or another upon the activists and organizations of other Arab countries.

Collective work does not end with media discourse. Rather, there are a number of common denominators we must work on to reach a developed state in Arab society. These are the fields of planning, coordination, cooperation, and support for the cause of human rights. I believe that this is imperative since the ranks of activists must be widened. It cannot be limited to the elite, or those who are interested in or work in human rights. Consideration must be given to how all of Arab society might participate in the process of societal construction, and how we can reach a result to the effect that all every citizen and individual in any Arab society know its rights, and defends democracy from oppression, persecution and tyranny. How do we enable the Arab person to rectify the course of a tyrannical and oppressive government?!!!

We must first realize the difficulty and perils of the task, in spite of the fact that the human rights movement is considered one of the most important accomplishments of this age. However, this accomplishment is not completely protecting from evil, and dangers will continue to threaten it. "The recorded accomplishments of the human rights movement, whether in modernizing Arab political thought or opposing human rights violations regardless of their type or source, do not enable it until now to influence events". We must be certain that that the human rights movement is not merely a complement to the role of governments. Rather, it should be a partner to them in the process of societal construction, anchoring the laws of democracy, justice, and equality, and observing the three instruments of power. Can we, as human rights organizations, play the role of partner and observer? Are tyrannical and oppressive governments convinced of our participation with them?

Allow me to frankly say that we do not deal with our role as we should. In one form or another, we contribute to the survival of the general policies of governments. We seek the specific at the expense of the general, and we do not work with seriousness and true intentions for the sake of transforming theoretical issues and dreams into reality.

This is the starting point with which I wished to begin my contribution, under the title of "coordination and competition in the Arab human rights movement".

Allow me to speak firstly on coordination:

Probably all colleagues present, and especially those who work in the field of human rights through groups, organizations and centers, would share my opinion that the present state of coordination between Arab human rights organizations does not go beyond exchanging publications and media announcements. Sometimes they are given the opportunity for informal meetings in conferences and seminars, which Dr. Munsif Al-Marzuqi refers to as, "foreign credentials on topics such as specificity, globalization, and the concept of human rights in Islamic thought".

Coordination has not transcended fax and email messages of criticism and solidarity sent from one center or another.

Most Arab human rights organizations coordinate with each other when they need to form pressure during the opposition of violations an activist or organization has been exposed to. Unfortunately, this coordination is not lasting. It is regrettable to say that the vast energy and wide experience of the Arab human rights movement has not yet been exploited within the one group which combines them in a continually coordinated relationship and organizes their work in a unified view for realizing a general goal. This goal is the anchoring of "democratic laws of freedom and equality" and the creation of a democratic Arab society.

In my opinion, previous and current experiences have confirmed the failure of strengthening the supports of the Arab human rights movement. This can be seen by what activists have been exposed to in countries such as Tunisia, Egypt and the Sudan, whether by issuing announcements of solidarity, affliction, or refutation. These in itself are a form governments have accustomed to and now do not readily accept. They are short lived, and therefore do not continue mobilization and action for periods long enough to allow placing pressure on governments and the possibility of working with them.

This is what urges us, without placing obstacles and logistic calculations, to work towards creating a strong and sturdy body for the movement. The movement must be capable of facing the difficult future awaiting us in the age of globalization, and the intellectual, cultural, and political invasion against our Arab nations.

Thus the problem is, as Dr. Al-Marzuqi named it, organizational. Let us think about how we might rebuild Arab organizations. Let us stop turning in circles. Let us rid ourselves of striving for the specific at the expense of the general...

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to frankly say, that there are people who have abused the Arab human rights movement though work and practice. Examples of this are not limited to one country or another, but rather every country has a sufficient amount of problems with a

personal basis. The controversy is not found in the work agenda, and not in the work mode, but rather comes from the personal notion that others should not be present and the feeling of threat by the expansion of the field of activists and organizations. There are those who claim that they are the only ones capable of undertaking work in the field of human rights with a high level of professionalism. They close the doors in the face of others so as to remain alone in the field, and not give way to competition. They claim this on a professional basis, fostering the general goal as a first priority. This is the entrance point for the tile of this paper, "competition".

I believe that every Arab country needs a great number of human rights organizations. This is due to the increase of violations, and the widespread corruption in the apparatuses of Arab governments for which the Arab citizen pays its price. If no agreement is made as to the necessity of there being a large number of human rights organizations, specialization will prevail. Organizations will work on different agendas and division of roles, with the view that human rights is too wide of a field for only one or even ten organizations to work on. We must stop referring to merely those who work in the field of human rights as activists, and rather the circle must be widened to include the Arab citizen. Competition is not for the sake of continuing some organizations at the expense of others, and not for competing before financiers. Rather, the Arab citizen should rule, and we must assume that our work and service is for them and not for the benefit of the granting parties.

One of the most prominent causes that brought competition in the human rights movement to a level that reflects a negative image of the masses and societies, is the idiosyncrasies and contradictions in views, general goals and policies. For example, there is a real difference in views concerning relationships with the authorities or government. Some believe that human rights organizations must be completely separate from the authorities. This is correct in my opinion, considering that the authorities, or the government, are the primary violators of human rights. Some block negotiations by violating power. They do this so as to protect their kingdoms built under the slogan of human rights. During a clash of opinions or a contradiction, it becomes clear that the outward appearance of some cases is competition, yet the essence is struggle. This may go as far as exchanging accusations and distorting personalities and methods.

The essence of this discussion is that there is a real problem in the matter of coordination between Arab human rights organizations. I don't want the discussion here to be very direct, with details and precise examples. What I really wanted to do is open the forum before you all at this conference for an exchange of discussion and results. I meant the result of this contribution to be the intellectual provocation of the

attendees, on the basis that as long as we convene on this problem, (duty and logic making its treatment incumbent), and fulfil our responsibilities, we will create solutions harmonious to realizing the general aim.

I believe that if we want a beginning, reality confirms the inevitability of creating coordination and a degree of collected work. This must apply to all aspects of work and all work agendas which organizations adopt. Iraqi children die from starvation day after day within the sight and reach of Arab, Islamic, and European worlds while governments do nothing. Is it not a shame for us as activists to stay silent and continue our work as if nothing has happened?

The children in the Yemen who die victims of armed struggles, the activists of Arab countries who are exposed to screaming violations from governments, the issues of Arab women who do not obtain their slightest rights as humans, and are still insistent upon old customs and traditions, the Palestinian refugees who are facing the perils of silent expulsion from some Arab countries, the Palestinians of Jerusalem who are exposed to the confiscation of their land and property by the hands of the greedy Israeli occupation...The political, civil, and cultural rights of the Arab citizen in every place are being violated at every moment...

These issues, and others too many to count, must be placed on the ladder of our priorities as activists and organizations. Time will not shed mercy on us if we remain working as we do now. However, commencing work and preparing for the first step is the right course, even if we don't reach its end.

In this context, I believe that a unified view and common goals are two of the requirements for creating a strong Arab human rights movement. We are in need of a body that gathers the scattered Arab organizations which work on different agendas and believe that they are the "supers" of the world of human rights. When we agree on a view and goals with one authority for human rights organizations, we must do so based on the following:

1. The basis of the human rights movement must be work, and it essence must be voluntary.
2. The fundamental referential authority for human rights is the international standards and charters.
3. Complete separation from the authorities and neutral professional work.
4. Pluralism of human rights organizations must invest in the framework of complementing and unifying efforts, rather than competition and struggle based on the standards and interest of organizations or individuals.
5. A coordinating conference must be held for human rights organizations in Arab countries to delineate a shared agenda and effective and serious coordinating mechanisms.

These are merely recommendations, and they needn't be the only ones. The matter is left to discussion, rectification and additions. However, it is important that there be real intentions to work, and discuss the course to realizing a strong movement. Such a movement must be worthy of the respect of those who believe that no one can make himself the guardian of the human rights movement, and those committed to a collective work principle which guarantees the provision of conditions of power, strength, sturdiness and continuation.

Constraining Laws on Community Work

[18]By: Hany El Dahla

Community work is distinguished in most parts of the world as groups founded by citizens to work in various fields that do not seek profits or to profit the founders. It is worth our while to review the laws surrounding community organizations in Arab countries and in various parts of the world. We find that in the case of the latter, community organizations are accepted from many legal restrictions vis-a-vis Arab nations, which often aim to subject organizations to state oversight.

Without going into details of community organization laws (how they are funded, conditions of oversight over founding) we can highlight some features we find in most Arab laws.

In reviewing these texts, we find that they have given state authorities great discretion in registering and refusing registration to community organizations. Refusal can be handed down without reason. The texts gave oversight powers over elections of the managing board and power to review organizations' budgets, income, decisions, financial activity, and social, cultural activity. The state has power to dissolve organizations and revoke registration.

I must draw your attention to the fact that most Arab states have given discretion over founding organizations to the social affairs ministry, interior ministry, or some other administrative authority...Founding requests of these organizations have met with affirmative and negative responses. Either way, decisions were not made before competent legal authorities. They were made by security bodies that are sent these responses both secretly and publicly. They decide to allow founding or disallow it. There is no nation like Brazil, Mexico, Britain or India where an organization is considered a legal person after notifying the proper governmental authority of the statute of the organization and the names of the founders.

If we turn now to the common features of community organizations under most Arab laws, we find the following attributes:

Organizations do not seek profit, but works for the public good.
Organizations are voluntary and non-governmental.

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[18] A Jordanian Human Rights Activist

Organizations are apolitical and their charters contain language prohibiting political activity.
They are self-reliant and rely on donations to carry out financial and administrative affairs. Some organizations accept money from states to carry out their goals.
Members are citizens and foreigners are not accepted as members.

We must distinguish between charitable, normal, cultural and sports organizations. Community organizations are not unified at all.

There are charitable organizations like elderly aid, prison watchdogs, aid to the sick or poor...These organizations are usually funded by member donations, state allocations, other donations and activities of the organization. The social affairs ministry follows up and oversees organizations, usually...

There are societies and social clubs. Their goal is to organize lectures and awareness meetings on economic, social and civil issues. Usually, the social affairs ministry oversees them or perhaps the culture ministry.

There are sports clubs which organize sports like football, basketball, wrestling, etc. These are under the youth ministry...There are regular organizations founded to do work in different fields like human rights organizations, civil rights watchdogs, international relations, democratic development and conservation. These organizations are typically registered under the interior ministry.

It should be noted that syndicates are considered community organizations...There are two types of syndicates: professional syndicates for lawyers, doctors, engineers and so forth; and labor unions with various types of workers and their particular unions under the labor ministry.

The majority of community organization's complain of the lack of financial resources. This halts their activities and renders them unable to perform their work...

I have found some organizations that receive foreign funding and align themselves with nations and national funds. This has led to more organizations following this path...

Some organizations misused these moneys. Some officers derived personal benefit from them. This has marred the reputation of NGO's and

led to cries for ending international funding from certain nations...But receiving funds from UN bodies is considered objective funding from an international agency unrelated to national policies.

We have now come to other laws on community work. There are a number of laws that should not be overlooked that impact community work and civil society institutions that work in different fields...

There are laws on printing and press that govern issue of newspapers, publication of books and founding printing and press offices. These are laws that greatly affect community work. They deal with guarantees of freedom of expression, freedom of opinion, and cultural and press awareness...

There are social laws that prohibit the formation of any group that is not political, social, or syndicate unless agreed upon by an administrative authority...

Laws are different in other nations. Some nations do not require anything but notification of an administrative arbiter of desire to form an organization within 24 hours of the meeting. There are also prior agreements that must be acquired before every meeting.

There are emergency and martial laws and so forth that affect community organizations, allow their dissolution, allow dissolution of managing boards, allow interrogation and otherwise affect their liberty to carry about their business...

Finally, we should note that community work has a basic role in spreading a shared culture of public work. It should increase social, economic, and culture activism. It should spread a human rights mentality and foster understanding of the relationship between civil society and democracy, freedom of opinion and freedom of expression...

So, we find that oppressive nations do not allow community work to continues in liberty; neither freedom to exist, nor freedom to act... This necessitates collective action of community organizations, especially human rights organizations, to support each other against these apparatuses. We must spread the culture of human rights.

The Fundamental Problems facing Female Defenders

[19]By: Hakima Al-Shawi

Introduction:

Before presenting and discussing the fundamental problems facing female human rights defenders and activists, it is necessary to point out that the issue of women's rights has always been a sensitive and complicated issue. Discussion of the issue has not dared transcend specific boundaries within human rights organizations, with the exception of a few premonitions related to specific situations. These have dared to address the silenced speaker, and tackle the most important personal problems that obstruct the issue of women's rights violations and defense of such rights within human rights organizations. These problems face female defenders and activists of human rights in general, and women's rights in particular.

Before I begin to present and discuss the most important problems, I would like to emphasize some self-evident truths and points of departure. I begin with the following observations:

1. The woman we speak of is a complete human being, and not lacking in reason. She must, in reality, enjoy all of the human rights provided for in the universal human rights declaration.
2. Women are more than the half-person we speak of and defend rights and freedoms for in all societies. It is necessary for human rights organizations to take into consideration that this half-person - that is, women - has its rights violated many times over, and therefore also demands attention.
3. The issue of women's rights is not solely connected to the rights provided for in the universal human rights declaration. We demand that states and governments ratify them, and we demand appropriate legislation. The matter is also, as in the agreement to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women in article five, dependent on the adjustment of social types incompatible to the behavior of men and women. The goal of this is the eradication of prejudices, social norms, and all other behavior based on a concept of inferiority or superiority of one of the two genders, and the eradication of typical roles for men and women. This is the responsibility of states and governments, all those who defend

[19] Moroccan Human Rights Activists

human rights, and activists in human rights organizations and the rights movement in general.

In light of these observations and starting points, I will focus on the most important problems related to women's rights and female defenders of women's human rights. I will focus on mechanisms for treating these problems, and suggest solutions for overcoming them.

The Problems facing Female Defenders:

1. The view that women's rights do not generally enter the specialization of human rights organizations:

This idea, which has been circulated for many years within human rights organizations, has prevented the development of defending women's rights, and has rather made it a secondary interest, confined within narrow boundaries. This has stifled female rights defenders, and thus they began to establish specialized organizations for defending women's rights.

Although such work has strengthened an interest in women's rights, it should not be left out of human rights organizations' folders, for it also falls among their interests. Human rights organizations are the natural framework for addressing women's human rights.

Therefore, it is necessary to take precaution against falling into the trap of arbitrary distinction between women's rights issues and human rights issues. This occurs in a manner that implies that women's rights organizations specialize in women's rights whereas human rights organizations specialize in men's rights, or are more interested in them than women's rights. Consequently, women's rights must be treated in both general and specific frameworks.

2. The view that women's rights issues are "an inseparable element of human rights":

In spite of the dominating idea that women's rights are an inseparable element of the comprehensive human rights provided for in the human rights charters, there are additional rights specific to women. These are related to mothers' rights and are provided for in the agreements specific to women.

The two expressions "inseparable" and "element" imply that women merely have a share of human rights that are, in reality, men's rights. However the truth is that women have all of those human rights, in addition to rights specific to women.

In other words, the rights that are separable, temporally distinctive, and accept differentiation and special interest, are related to women. This,

is contrary to the stance that refuses to undertake organizational procedures or propaganda to support women's rights. It considers that to be a form of distinction between the two genders, and views women's rights as inseparable from general human rights.

One stance refuses a melting view of women's rights, and the other stance refuses an arbitrary division between women's rights and human rights, making it impossible to treat women's rights issues in a special manner. The United Nations is generally interested in human rights issues, and is also particularly concerned with women's rights issues, through private agreements and specialized mechanisms for holding conferences. The global conference for human rights held in Vienna in 1993, was considered a conference for women's rights in view of the great priority given to women's rights, and the massive attendance by women.

This interest in women's rights, whether on the side of the United Nations, or on the side of global, regional, or local organizations for human rights, is inspired by prejudice against women and violations of women's rights. Therefore, it is not necessary to treat the subject as a class, or an element of human rights, which consequently melts into general human rights and makes all special procedures for it considered differentiation. On the contrary, the agreement to eradicate all forms of prejudice against women made it clear that "the undertaking of special and temporary procedures which target the expediting of effective equality between men and women is not considered bias as this agreement defines it".

3. The absence or under-representation of women in the decision – making apparatuses of human rights organizations:

Whereas human rights organizations are blaming governments for preventing and discouraging women from occupying positions of power and decision, women are also suffering from estrangement – self imposed or not – from participation in the decision making apparatuses of human rights organizations. I will not present the realistic objective reasons which lead to the alienation and disabling of women from participation in work, specifically rights work. Rather, I will focus on the personal factors which have made women's presence weak or absent in human rights organizations, be it as a responsible party in an apparatus, or as a participant.

1. The previously mentioned problems related to work expectations and a view of women's rights issues, whether it be separatist or melting into human rights, are among the elements which have led to alienating women from human rights organizations and from taking responsible positions. The restriction of defending women's rights within narrow boundaries in human rights organizations has led a number of women with rich work experience to prefer

working in organizations specific to women and distance themselves from human rights organizations.

2. There are socio-psychological obstacles women suffer from, such as an inferior self image. This is made clear in their view of positions of responsibility and decision-making as a frightening arena specific to men, demanding complicated, imagined conditions women do not possess. A lack of brashness and confidence in one's abilities limits women's skills. This prevents female human rights activists from reaching positions of responsibility and decision making.
3. On the other hand, there are men who view the presence of female defenders of human rights as competition and a threat to the positions of power and decision-making that they have monopolized for centuries. They hinder the presence of women and threateningly advocate their own presence when faced with female colleagues.

Brashness is in expression and criticism. Quick surrender, weakness in knowledge and thinking. The situation is increasingly difficult, since it is demanded from human rights activists to defend equality between the two genders, and fight all forms of bias and derision towards women, intellectually and in practice. The result of a failed upbringing and cultural heritage creates embarrassment for women, from a split between what men adopt theoretically and what they practice in reality when interacting with their sisters, mothers, and female colleagues. Men's disgraceful behavior towards the opposite sex (not to women or female defenders particularly) has a negative effect on women's mental states, and prevents their continuation of work beside men, especially in positions of decision making.

If it so happened that women reached positions of responsibility and decision making beside men, they would be forced to undertake secondary and peripheral responsibilities, and be subordinate, submissive, and flexible.

4. Viewing the issue of defending women's rights to be solely a women's responsibility:

Female human rights activists suffer from activists distancing and denying their interest and defense of women's rights within human rights organizations, and viewing the issue as the specialization of women. This gender view of human rights is incompatible with the concept of equality in rights and their defense, without bias for any reason.

It was natural, at least in the beginning, for women to be the first to suggest the issue of gender, considering that they are directly concerned.

However, it is not at all natural for the responsibility of defending women's rights to remain the responsibility of women only and the responsibility of defending human rights that of men. This discrimination in distribution of roles creates a bias against women and a dwarfing of women's rights and their defense. The result is women's rights being considered a secondary issue, a gender issue, and not a human issue, peripheral to human rights issues which are considered essential and more important. Thus, human rights organizations are interested in issues of the male human, more than they are interested in issues of the male and female human, in a balanced and equal way, according to the volume of violations they are exposed to. If everyone agrees theoretically and practically that the volume of violations against women is greater, then it is logical that the defense of their rights also be greater.

These four problems are considered fundamental. They are the problems that face female defenders of human rights in regards to issues of treating women's rights within human rights organizations. Other, secondary problems can be divided from these, which hinder human rights activists, male and female, and prevent human rights organizations from undertaking an effective and influential role in defending human rights, raising a consciousness of them, and spreading noble and humane principles and values.

The problems presented here have a personal nature, and have been focused on, in view of their gravity, aside from more objective problems. The treatment of these problems cannot be solved except by self-review, self-criticism within our rights organizations, and subjection of all defenders of human rights to the issue and to personal authority. We believe that strengthening male and female activists theoretically, practically, and behaviorally, promises the creation of strong organizations and frameworks capable of positive work and influence and reaching the goals of defending human rights. Likewise, theoretical, intellectual and behavioral weakness, the breakdown of values, principles, ethics, and intelligence, personal struggles within human rights organizations, among human rights activists, and between male and female defenders of human rights, all anchor the reality of human rights and increase their violations, especially in our Arab society. This causes the ranks of human rights to lose its credibility and legitimacy. In turn, human rights defenders lose their role of defending, and that serves no one but the "imposters" of human rights.

Therefore, I believe that the teaching of human rights and noble and humane principles and values, must begin first of all with the education of the human rights defender and activist, before targeting the average citizen, the policeman, the judge, or different state organizations.

The want of something does not provide it, and as it is said, "the alternative cannot be created other than by the alternative person". In order for human rights organizations to undertake their roles, the following stipulations, principles, and values must be provided:

1. Patient and full comprehension of the human rights rank in its theoretical and practical aspects:
2. Comprehension of the international and local reality of human rights, as well as all of the factors and stipulations involved.
3. Provision of personal and behavioral capabilities which grant the ability to defend rights in all conditions and circumstances, and under all kinds of pressure.
4. Satisfaction, faith, and recognition of the human, its rights, freedoms and honor, whether male or female. Sincere defense, and endowment of ethics and noble values. Management and integrity of the self and others, and the ability to recognize mistakes, correct them, and transcend them.
5. Trust and equality between the two genders and the embodiment of that in daily practice.

These values, principles, and rights ethics must form an honor code for every rights defender within human rights organizations, which they can depend upon in daily and mass defense of rights.

On this basis then, it is possible for all the personal problems that face human rights organizations to melt away. I suggest that be our slogan within human rights organizations, as we are entering a new century, be "education of human rights defenders first".

I also suggest that an honor code be devised which includes the most basic requirements necessary for human rights activists to uphold and practice. This should be done with the goal of improving their performance within human rights organizations so as to undertake their role and actualize their aims of defending and protecting human rights in the vision of creating societies of freedom, democratic rights, justice, and law...

Chapter 5

Arab Human Rights Activists & Nations siege

Siege of Iraqi Nation as Example…!!!!!

Iraq and Human Rights

[20]By: Kazem Habib

I want to begin by thanking the organizers of this conference for their invitation to participate. This important gathering has tried to place the Iraqi people in view of the international arena. It has shown camaraderie throughout the current state of affairs. The solidarity that the Moroccan people have shown the Iraqi people also makes me very happy. They have rejected international sanctions imposed by the United States and Britain. They have also rejected ferocious missile attacks that blindly strike soldiers, citizens and innocents alike. I wish for the Moroccan people liberty, democracy and the realization of human rights.

There are three factors of oppression the Iraqi people that we must face in order to rid the Iraqi people of them We must sho solidarity to end them. We can describe them as follows:

International economic sanctions have been imposed on the Iraqi people for almost a decade without any sign of being lifted on the horizon. Instead, all evidence suggests that the USA and Britain want to continue them for a long time. This is a grave abuse against human rights and a violation of UN principles in the following ways:

I will try to be brief.
First:
I must begin with establishing the truth: American sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people do not enjoy international legality. They are completely unacceptable to the international community. All human rights organizations testify that sanctions target the Iraqi people and the coming generation. It is an attempt to crush the spirit of a people and their right to work and live in decency.

Economic sanctions have caused economic losses to the state of around 240 to 250 billion American dollars throughout the last 10 years. This is not just because of losses to petroleum exports, but because of a loss of products coming off of assembly lines, the downward spiral of production and the complete cessation of development and productive investment and so on.
Secondly:

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[20] Iraqi Human Rights activist

The US Congress at the end of 1998 issued a terrible law called the "Iraqi liberation law" that Clinton signed. This law is considered an international abuse in three regards in addition to intransigence in continuing the sanctions. These are:

Abuse against principles of rules of procedure governing member state relations in the UN General Assembly. It is also an abuse against the principles that permanent members of the Security Council should uphold.

It is an abuse against principles of human rights.

It is a dangerous precedent in international relations, just as the law to liberate Cuba was.

Third: The state of Human Rights in Iraq

The terrible happenings and tragedy that the Iraqi people live through does not reach back to just the beginning of sanctions in 1990, but is linked to three factors that as human rights activists, we are bound to consider with objectivity and responsibility. We must characterize them without beautifying them, so as to aid the Iraqi people in getting rid of them. I mean the following:

Grave abuses against public liberties, democracy and human rights on a state level and by its agents;

Economic policies and military dictatorship that has ruled Iraq for decades past;

Illogical and absurd policies that the regime has practiced against neighboring states that has ended in the situation now gripping Iraq.

The Nature of the State:

The Iraqi people have faced terrible circumstances for almost three decades. They are distinguished by total state annexation of public liberties, a democratic life and human rights. All traces of a rule of law have disappeared into this state, as have all traces of a civil society. We can, indeed, say that it is an oppressive and authoritarian state without legal basis. The Iraqi individual loses all legitimate rights established in human rights, especially the right to life, decency and personal security. This also includes the individual's right to freedom to express opinions, to publish, demonstrate and submit grievances. There has not been freedom of the press nor freedom of people to organize a regular party life

or professional bodies for decades. Neither have Iraqis been given the right to property, work, shelter and freedom of movement, etc.

The Role of Security and Special Agents

The society faces a state that relies on security, intelligence and special agencies to oversee and pursue residents. They interfere in the daily affairs of people. Indeed, they even interfere in the right of Iraqis to dream. The regime's eyes are everywhere; neighborhoods, houses, places of work, schools, universities and state circles. The armed forces have the right to arrest and kidnap with no answerability. It is a state truly headed by the president of the regime.

Security, intelligence and special agencies have established wide powers of disappearing citizens from their houses, shops, or from the streets. The UN working group recorded 15,781 forced disappearances. Iraqi opposition information suggests that the actual number is much higher. Indeed, most families fear registering disappearances will result in pursuits, abuse and imprisonment.

Torture, Prisons and Arrests

Throughout the past years, the state has constructed a number of prison camps underground. This is in addition to the great number of prisons and detention camps already known. Camps underground, in the desert and in many other places do not differ much from Nazi concentration camps in security treatment of victims. Torture includes many forms of psychological and physical torture, reaching up to 50 known kinds in Iraq. One is respected for devising new means of torture and break victims. Practices include use of electric cables and electric currents, beating with plastic hoses and cables, burning and scarring with cigarettes in sensitive areas,, penetrating the anus with shafts, using candles to burn the bottoms of feet while being bound in irons that do not permit movement, beating with bamboo sticks, whipping, and severe blows to the soles of feet and subsequently forcing jogging to prevent scabs forming. They have devised special tortures: focusing light onto the eyes to prevent sleep, use of repetitive, irritating noises, dropping droplets of cold water onto the forehead repetitively and for long periods of time, taking victims to the farthest limits of sanity and causing serious psychological harm. Sometimes they continuously kick the scrotum and then attempt to rape the victim, whether the victim is man or woman. Agents whip the palms of victims' hands and tear out fingernails and toenails. They push victims' heads into sinks filled with water until they almost drown. They pour hot

water over sensitive areas of victims. They leave victims under the burning sun for hours without water or cover. They leave victims on the roofs of houses during winter nights. They feed victims poison, of various types, in their milk or tea. They pour acid on victims' bodies and clothes. They force victims into broken bathrooms filled with excrement and force them to urinate. They leave victims naked in rooms filled with vicious insects. They leave victims tied up in continuously pitch dark rooms for months, feeding victims putrid food and water through a hole. And so on. Most of the time, victims are blind-folded. Gun shots are fired at random about them to remind them that they can be killed at any time. Sometimes they do kill them. They practice psychological torture. Victims watch other victims being tortured. Psychological torture is combined with physical. Often, torturers drink alcohol to become more cruel and lose whatever nerves are left if torture must continue after a victim has not yet broken. Agents lose all measure of humanity. Sometimes they torture victims' wives, husbands, and children. Torture is conducted in front of the victim. Family members are stripped and subjected to sexual abuse. Torturers are given general right to their victims within the cells, allowing them to strike victims for hours and days. They strike victims' necks with shoes damaging the nervous system and mind. Sometimes victims are asked to walk on all fours and are beaten by agents to speed them up. Sometimes victims are broken by torturing family and friends, destroying their psychological and physical well-being. The regime has been stripping away human rights for years. They impose punishments like cutting off ears, hands, legs, and even noses of those who have been arrested. Many of these are politicians that were accused publicly to damage their reputation. The crime itself is hard to recall or even speak about. A great number have died under torture. They are of all ages, parties, peoples, religions and communities. Those that left long years of torture were faced with haunting nightmares. They become invalids, as has happened to Baath and communist officers. 32 officers were faced with charges of affiliation to the Iraqi Communist Party. They were arrested and tortured, then executed in 1978. It is worth mentioning that a large number of Arab citizens were victims of Iraqi intelligence and security agents because of their lack of support for the regime or their refusal to participate in Iraq's wars.

All of this confirms that arrested and prisoners facing execution have not had the least standards of a fair trial met. They have not had access to any democratic process or suitable defense. Instead, they face revolutionary and special courts just like the inquisition of the Middle Ages. These were formed extraordinarily, and their decisions are like decrees. Many of their rulings are passed down after torture has taken away the

lives of accused, or after ten years or more of imprisonment. No citizen can raise a grievance against security agencies or prison administrations without facing prison or torture himself. Or even death.

This reality allows us to chalk up a third problem: the Iraqi judiciary does not enjoy any power of independence. It is completely subject to the president of the Revolutionary Leadership Council (RLC). It is completely incapable of any state oversight. These judges basically represent the security agencies and military intelligence. Some of them have diplomas from law schools or political science faculties, but they work in the military, police or special agencies of the Republican Palace. Even if there was a judge who enjoyed some measure of impartiality or desired to do so, he would be unable to do anything for fear of his own life or family or, at the least, his job.

Iraqi Diaspora:

There are about 2.5 to 3 million Iraqis that have dispersed. The greatest portion of these left Iraq for one of five reasons:

Bloody terrorism against the Iraqi opposition since the Baath took power;
Forced emigration of more than 400,000 persons considered of non-Iraqi descent (mostly Arabs or Kurds);
Flight from the regimes different wars, whether the flight was from conscription or fear of death in the battalions on the field;
Economic circumstances spiraling downward because of economic sanctions and the military-political regime policies;
Flight because of discriminatory policies against certain religious and ethnic groups, and immoral behavior of agents in pursuing families -- and especially women -- of other religions.

Ideology of the One Party:

There is one ideology imposed on the country, and that is Baathism. It is imposed on all surrounding ideologies. It is the Baath Party's idea to put all parties, ideologies and other policies under one great tent of Baathism. None of these are allowed to leave it. For that reason, a wide campaign was launched to bring in all other powers not within this fold. The Baath Party rules with utter discrimination based on religious confession, territoriality, and racism. This is what was responsible for tearing the Iraqi people apart into a plurality of nations, religions and ethnicity that stretch back millennia. We divide separation into two:

A.Grievous racism against Kurds that enveloped tens of thousands of innocents because of their calls for security and legitimate rights. We should note three basic occurrences:

Use of chemical weapons on Helbaja, a Kurdish city on the Iranian border, and on the Behinan region on the Turkish border. Additionally, various types of weapons were used in battlefields of Iraqi Kurdistan killing 100,000;

Fierce military attacks used after the popular uprising in 1991. This led to the emigration of half a million persons to Turkey and Iran. It lead to the imposition of a protected zone in the north of Iraq (especially Kurdistan) and in the south. The long war was a result of the regime's refusal of the Kurds' natural rights in 1970 and its refusal to grant self-rule. This ignited continuous war that decimated the lives of the sons and daughters of both peoples and other national minorities. We can rightly say that parties ruling Kurdistan also abuse human rights. They rule by cronyism and single-partyism. It has divided Iraqi Kurdistan in two: an Arbil government and a Suleimania government.

Fierce hatred against the Iranian minority, considered spies. The regime forced the emigration of 400,000 Kurds and Southern and Central Arabs accusing them of loyalty to Iran. This was done in full knowledge of their Iraqi citizenship and residency in the country for hundreds of years. They were considered not of Arab "blood"! The ruling party tried -- under Sadism Hussein -- to spread the idea that Iraqi marriage to Iranian women weakened Arab blood. This became notable not only in the forced emigration process conducted against those with Persian roots, but also in financial incentives offered to those who divorced their Persian wives and husbands. They would sometimes be arrested, even though Iran is a Muslim nation, because of different official interpretations of religious principles.

Media, education, writing and commercial agencies enculturated and continue to enculturate Arabization of all public discourse and history, or concentrate on ancient Iraqi history and glorify it and its Arabness. It approaches Fascist racism. They ignore the peoples and civilizations of Iraq like the Sumerians, Babylonians, Echeldians, Assyrians and Akkadians.

B. Wars of the Foreign Regime

In Iraq's war against Iran, a policy of widening aggression was followed. The same policy justified the invasion of Kuwait. The US and its allies invested in this unjust war on the Iraqi people. It was the cause of tens of

thousands of Iraqi deaths and more wounded and disabled. These are in addition to the material losses that are hard to estimate. Infrastructure was destroyed and Iraqi businesses and the fruits of their labor were decimated. Iraq returned to a pre-industrial age. The potential for Iraq to withdraw peaceably from Kuwait was never even attempted.

Regime's Economic Policies:

I referred to the social and economic tragedy that Iraq is undergoing as not just a product of sanctions, but also linked to economic and military policies that violate human rights and the principles of social justice.

International sanctions have imposed a great financial cost on Iraq that ranges between 200 and 220 billion dollars over the course of the last ten years. A large part of this was in oil that remained untapped below the earth. Reliable statistics point to Iraqi expenditures of 253 billion dollars on military reasons between 1976 and 1990, for an average yearly expenditure of 16.9 billion dollars. Add to that hundreds of billions in losses during the first and second Gulf wars. Add also the costs of destroying weapons of mass destruction in conformity to Security Council resolutions imposed on Iraq. The Unified Arab Economic Report estimated losses of the second Gulf War to be more than 620 billion dollars.

The human tragedy of Iraq is not just in the economic arena, but it occupies a special social place. Tens of thousands of children and youth left schools to work in the streets to give their families a chance to get by. Organized crime, theft, and misuse of state resources increased all within the government sector. Plus, banditry and theft in general increased. Bribes became regular phenomena in every state agency and their guards. Passports went for sale. Courts, police and so on engaged in wholesale corruption. Commerce in human organs opened up for the benefit of neighboring and other countries. In this way, merchants profited from their children in the international organ trade. Iraqis, in spite of all efforts to resist, became reduced to begging and fear of death. Iraq lives in tragedy. We must stop it not just for the present generation, but for the good of coming generations. I see human rights organizations taking the initiative in the following ways:

They must state the truth that the Iraqi regime will not end its oppressive rule. It is hard to imagine the continuation of these circumstances for much longer. The problems and struggles will exact a high toll on Iraqi unity as a people and land in addition to national society and economy. It

will harm life and health. It will destroy the dignity and future of the coming generations. It will create explosive popular unrest against rulers that have not left a single family unabused. The blood that has flowed in Iraq for four decades will continue to flow if proper steps are not taken toward two goals immediately. Without them, the tragedy will be too great to bear. Even death would be better. On this note, I call human rights organizations to work for the following:

The immediate lifting of economic sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people for more than nine year, and allowance of exports of petroleum other prime materials plus imports of necessary commodities for three purposes:

Relieve consumption needs of basic commodities, especially food and medicine;
Secure basics of economic and social development and what that includes by way of human development, and restore construction and infrastructure destroyed by war, including institutions of health, education and social services;
Delay loan payments and war reparations imposed on Iraq for a decade into the 21st Century, and then re-study the issue after that. Grant financial and technical aid to restore construction destroyed by war and restart the process prevented by economic sanctions.

Work to comply with resolution 688 of 1991 on democracy and human rights that opened up the possibility to change oppressive authoritarianism in Iraq for the good of freedom, democracy and human rights. It covers release of war and political prisoners, the return of refugees and forced émigrés, and guarantees the presence of a transitional government for a short period of time to set the election process in motion in a free and democratic way under the supervision of Arab, regional and international organizations. It allows for the establishment of a democratic civil constitution for a state in which Arabs, Kurds and all other national and religious minorities live together. It provides for different beliefs, opinions and ideas among different political parties in a peaceful, tolerant and cooperative environment. This all means that we should refuse direct and indirect intervention in the affairs of the Iraqi people and the Iraqi opposition in the atrocious way that the US does so. The US' attempts to co-opt opposition groups harms Iraqi opposition. The support of people working together against oppression and current despotism in a peaceful way without more blood has become a critical need that cannot be avoided.

Iraqi Sanctions and International Double Standards

[21]By: Abd El Hussein Shabaan

I suppose that the issue of international sanctions on Iraq occupies many questions and discussions, not just in the legal, economic, social and political spheres, but also in the moral one. This is especially true as international sanctions continue into their ninth year against the Iraqi people against their will and publishing them for crimes they did not commit. Economic sanctions are a type of economic war. It is an extension of the military war by more painful and terrible means. The military war continued against Iraq because of its aggression on Kuwait for 42 days. The destructive economic war has continued more than 80 times longer than the military one...

The issue excites a number of problems. These are not just practical ones, nor problems of economic, social and psychological effects. The issue excites problems of jurisprudence and law. What is meant by international crimes? What is desired from a system of economic sanctions, either in internal results or in the international system? If the punishment is under the umbrella of law, and it is an attempt to rectify abuses against legal principles or the prevention of their execution, then that is a sound legal purpose. However, continuation of these penalties without a defined goal gives rise to many legal questions of jurisprudence on the true goals of continuing sanctions. It is an unnamed act of social extermination that has been practiced on Iraq since 1990 when Security Council resolution no. 661 was passed. Since then, more than 30 resolutions on Iraq have been passed, and every one of them has been frighteningly unjust to national dignity. These resolutions have tried a new experiment in the realm of international law. According to the UN Charter, economic sanctions were imposed twice -- incompletely and with limitations -- against Rhodesia and South Africa.

But since 1990, there has been no Eastern Block lead by the Soviet Union. The hegemony of the US has imposed a system of economic punishments wider and less defined in the case of Iraq. It has used such sanctions against Iraq, Yugoslavia, Somalia, Libya, Liberia, Haiti, Angola, Rwanda, and Sudan. Of course, there are other long economic sanctions but they are outside of UN action, e.g. Israel's sanctions against South Lebanon or certain occupied Palestinian and Arab areas. There are American sanctions against Cuba that have lasted three decades.

[21] Member of AOHR in London and HR activist

The regime of economic sanctions imposed at present has created a new type of cruel lawmaking on the international level. This is one of the results of the new international regime -- negative, of course. One of the correlaries is that the punitive system is used to against whole peoples and nations -- especially developing nations and the Third World. The international system is wanted to establish control over economic resources, wealth, and natural resources in spite of international conventions that confirm the right of people to their natural resources, money and resources...to their sovereignty and national dignity.

Iraq has become a country that resembles a refugee camp because of UN resolutions. It was wealthy in spite of shortages in it. Resolutions 706, 712 and 986 all restrict food and petrol. I will not go into the humanitarian dimensions of the sanctions; Dr. Violet Dagher will do that. I suppose the US sought to impose economic sanctions on Iraq, contrary to what they say, in order to punish the Iraqi people, deplete their technological effectiveness and attack their learned particularly. The latter have taken to selling their writings along the sidewalks. I draw your attention to two points:

When Schwarzkopff was asked about punishing the Iraqi people, he said:

[All of the people are not innocent for two reasons. First, because part of them agree with aggression on Kuwait and second, because a large part agree that Saddam Hussein stays in power in the country.]

In a television interview, Madeline Albright was asked how the deaths of half a million Iraqi children was justified. Because of Saddam Hussein being in power? She responded yes, the Iraqi people deserve that. This reflects the sadistic degree that the US thinks in. It is not a punishment to the Iraqi regime, but to the people and the future of the region. Especially if it was able to sell weaponry. After the Gulf War, the US sold more than 50 times what it sold before it.

Economic sanctions have contributed toward the doubling of human rights abuses in Iraq. These are the same rights that were threatened before sanctions, but worse. These are not just civil and political rights, but economic, social and cultural rights. The Iraqi people have been caught between a rock and a hard place. On one hand, there are the economic sanctions, and on the other, there is internal oppression. The economic sanctions regime has abolished the right to develop. That it is a basic

right to human rights. Abuses against freedom of expression, assembly, organization and political participation have all doubled...

I want to point out the importance of circulating an international draft declaration on preventing the punishment of peoples. It is an initiative undertaken by the Arab Commission for Human Rights. They publicized it in 1998 in their meeting in London on international sanctions and the Arab reality.

Before I close, I want to point out an important issue. All resolutions of the Security Council -- on Iraq -- are for an indeterminate time and require the passage of other resolutions by the Security Council. We know that it is in power of the five permanent members to put off any resolution of this kind. With this, we realize the future prospects of Iraq. These sanctions are stronger than what befits an international consultative body. The UN General Assembly according to Article 12 has the right to pass a resolution denying a people independence by a simple plurality.

If the Security Council has readied itself for oversight, inspection and the use of airplanes and airports according to resolution 687, why hasn't it readied itself to interfere and impose respect for human rights according to resolution 688 -- the resolution on respect for human rights and respect for political rights of all citizens? This resolution is "not binding" because it was not passed under Chapter 7 as were the other resolutions on Iraq. It is doomed to be a forgotten resolution. No one will be interested in it and neither the Security Council nor the United States will insist on its compliance. The US, which raises the flag of human rights, will not care as the Iraqi state, which signed all the other resolutions required of it, will not care. Not even the Iraqi opposition will attempt to comply with the resolution. The resolution called for the end of oppression that civilians face in the Kurdish regions and for respect for human rights. It confirmed the necessity to hold free elèctions.

The Iraqi People Confronting Barbarism...!!!

[22]By: Violette Dagher

It was not easy to go to Iraq for many reasons. One of them is that many human rights activists have not done this important task for reasons of distancing themselves from the Iraqi regime. I believe that it is incumbent upon us to publicize what is happening. We are citizens of silence surrounding Iraq. I believe that we have not done what we must as Arabs and human rights workers to scandalize these events.

I am here to speak to my opinion in Iraq. There is something terrible that is happening to Iraq. The unheard side of things is the children in the streets and hospitals. There are people that die for no reason other than a great power wishes it so. We must do something for the Iraqi people and not fear the calling to go beyond exculpating ourselves in speech alone. We call for the lifting of sanctions that are not justified. It was said in the beginning that sanctions were necessary for Iraq to leave Kuwait. Iraq left and sanctions remained. I am sorry that the president of the Iraqi Society could not be here with us because of circumstances beyond his control. Many fellows will say that the president of the Iraqi Society would only give the official line, but it would have been wonderful if he had been here, nonetheless. We cannot even call him.

I visited Baghdad and no other city. I visited a few places and saw the traces of sanctions that have lasted years and the war that destroyed enough of Iraq to equal 7 nuclear bombs. All types of weapons were used in that war. Advanced arms and arms prohibited by the United Nations. They leave an imprint on the next generation. I believe that what was desired is the destruction of Iraqi people. I personally want to talk now about children in Iraq who have not been allowed to contribute to humanity, as they would have been if they had been left alone. Sanctions are unjustified because in the very first weeks it was possible to impose the UN's and the US' will.

So I visited a refugee camp. Arabs were hidden away in it without even a ventilation shaft. It appeared that the designs of the camp had been submitted by Sweden because it had designed and erected it. Brother Nasser al Ghazali told me that there was a case against Sweden, which had submitted the plans to the Americans. We entered the camp and saw all the corpses and disabled along the walls. We saw fingerprints of

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[22] Lebanon HR activist and member of ACHR - France

children against the wall alongside pictures of people falling into boiling water. The camp got very hot. There was a woman introduced to us. She told us that she lost all of her children one night in an air raid on the refugee camp. She decided from that point on to remain until death at that camp. She told us some of what happened that night. This speaks to the atrocious barbarism that was worked upon the Iraqi people.

I also visited the Sadam Children's Hospital. I confess that it was too much for me to look at all those children, the objects of their families' affection, unprotected. The hospital director said that in that hospital alone, three children died every day. (*sobs*) Excuse me, for I am a mother.

When I returned home and saw my child, I could not respond when she spoke to me. I didn't hear or act. I was struck by what I saw and feelings of guilt. We have not done what we must for this people. For these children. This is our state of things. We are outside of the sanctions and so these Iraqis who live through the sanctions mean nothing to you. These people sometimes cannot eat for two or three weeks. This is what has made every woman preserve bread in her house for her children and become used to regular shortages. (There are sanctions on tehina, oil, and soap). There is a great exodus from schools today. We went to a school and saw children studying. The exodus is because of families' reliance on their children to work to earn a bit of money to get by. There is another reason, and that is many children go to school that do not eat nor have not eaten. How can they study at school? How can they have the mental energy or concern? As for the school itself, there were neither books nor pencils. Schools rely in aid from international organizations. Diseases spread among the Iraqi people as a result of modern weapons tested on them. The average age in Iraq has declined as a result of these weapons as well. Families sell all that they own on the sidewalks. When we asked why the children died, they said for lack of medicine and lack of food. This is beside the infrastructure destroyed by war that cannot be repaired because the country cannot buy what it needs.

My hope is that you do something for the good of the Iraqi people. Maybe it would be good if you left this conference with an indication – you will find a way to show it – of solidarity with the Iraqi people.

A study run in 1993 showed that the Baghdad governorate on 2000 children in 50 primary schools between the ages of 6 and 15 found that children had problems concentrating, responding, recalling, and understanding. There was a decrease in homework being completed and

in taking responsibility. There was an increase in flight from the schools. This is all in addition to cases of theft increasing by over 200 % and severe psychological reactions stemming from the sanctions. There were an especially high number of thefts of money, food and school necessities because of material, food, and emotional deficiencies and the need to immediately satisfy them. Child abuse in the family increased along with family problems, which damage children and lead to psychological and emotional deficiencies and unsettlement, etc.

The study also showed that 36% of the sample went to school without eating breakfast and that 30% did not eat lunch during the break. 10% ate no meal after that. The sampled children told those conducting the study that it was because their families did not have enough food or because of the poor quality of the food they offered them. 76% of them went to school without carrying sandwiches with them to compensate for no breakfast. As for those that ate breakfast, 58% of them had only a cup of tea or tea and bread.

In this environment, students are cut off from the world around them. Students cannot benefit from scientific or cultural cooperation with other universities around the world. Students cannot get specialized scientific magazines nor conduct shared research. They cannot participate in scientific conferences or training programs. Add to this all the factors of weak incentives to learn offered in educational bodies because of material difficulties and the low rate of parents following up on the education of their children because they require children to work for basic material needs. There is a lack of necessities to ward off cold and heat in schools, increasing the rate of sickness among students, sick leave and so on in the way of negative educational effects.

Before sanctions, education was free and compulsory for both sexes until 16. Even after the destruction of youth clubs, schools and universities during the war, no such buildings have been erected during the sanctions. They have lost the proper procedures to educate. They cannot print schoolbooks in order to save on ink and other necessities that cost in 1997 alone 450 billion dinars. Pencils, for example, were added to the list of prohibitions because of graphite. Their price increased by over 50 times. At schools, books are returned at the end of the year. Only 50% are returned in usable condition. Printing has decreased 90% for books, newspapers, lessons, and children's magazines. Likewise, state printing declined 60% because of the cutting off of imported paper of different kinds.

This doesn't stop there. Sanctions have impacted all cultural and artistic relations near and far. Films, theater, music, folklore, and visual arts have all been affected. This is the result of destruction, delay, and general lack of necessary material to produce content for television, radio, etc. All contact with the outside world has been restricted by air, sea, or land, affecting participation in international expositions and conferences and cultural exchanges.

The State of Health:

Statistics show a sharp rise in diseases related to – not only – food deficiency. Diseases are also carried by polluted water. The working activity of water purification plants has severely declined. Heavy water storage stations and rainwater drainage plants have ceased activity because of the lack of intermediary tools available. This has decreased the per capita availability of water from 320 liters to 128 liters. The quantity and quality of drinking water has declined because of destruction to factories producing chlorine, alum, and the materials needed to produce and maintain them. This threatens Baghdad and other cities especially in the summertime when heat rises to 50 degrees centigrade. Heavy water pumping plants have stopped as a result of the sanctions and the lack of intermediary tools. The water has become directly flowing. Because of that, citizens have been exposed to a number of dangerous diseases and decreased ability to gather and burn waste. Reports have indicated that quotas of dried milk to children less than a year of age represent a half of their regular needs. This causes mothers to mix milk with contaminated water leading to death and disease. It is worth mentioning that mothers do not produce enough milk because of poor diets.

Uranium and Its Effects:

Thousands of tons of explosives were used in international wars; including weapons containing depleted uranium, against the laws of a "clean" war. This shows that the war was against a people. David Rivkin, former British defense minister, confessed on 6/12/1994 that British forces used 88 bombs polluted with depleted uranium and that American forces used a far greater quantity. According to the president of the Science and National Security Institution in Washington, 940,000 30mm bullets were used containing 30 mg of depleted uranium in addition to 4,000 120mm bullets. That approaches 300 tons of depleted uranium delivered by allied forces to the south of Iraq and northern Kuwait, irradiating and poisoning the area. A large part of this radiation was spread kilometers by peninsular desert winds.

I cite a 1991 report on the deaths of children less than five years of age that stated such deaths increased 5 times within a few months. These children were like the victims of the Hiroshima bomb: languid, insensitive. A study prepared in 1993 by American experts states that it is likely that 150,000 Iraqi children had died since 1991 as a result of various diseases including cancer, blood problems and previously unknown internal diseases as a result of uranium poisoning. Side effects include sores developing in the eyes and hands. There was an unnatural increase in leukemia, cancers of the lungs, skin, and digestive system. There was an increase in cases of strange diseases in fetal development like extra organs and live births with elephantine heads and stillbirths without heads. There were eye problems and hair would fall out. All this and the number of people afflicted by infectious diseases and dizziness followed by black-outs and loss of balance. Both sexes were afflicted with sterility and the cases of miscarriage, stillbirth and premature death increased in children.

Chapter 6

Arab Human Rights Movement.. The History and .. The Future!!

The Arab Organization of Human Rights: Intransigence in the Face of Deteriorating Circumstances

[23]By: Mohsen Awad

I must give my thanks to the Arab Association for Human Rights and the Arab Program Activists. Today is the first day of the 17th year of the Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR). It is a good occasion to evaluate some of the difficulties of the last 17 years in a couple minutes.

AOHR was founded in Lima Sol in Cyprus on 3 December 1983 in a workshop in the crisis of democracy and human rights. The founders could not find a single Arab country to accept the meeting. So it was held in Cyprus...

AOHR, since its founding, has taken to work from Cairo, Egypt. It has encountered some difficulties over the course of its work in different Arab countries, like what happened to the AOHR branch in Sudan because of the military coup in 1989. Sometimes, situations were better when establishing branch organizations were considered legitimate...

AOHR is a network by nature and not a hierarchy. Authority is vested in a general body convened every three years. The organization is distinguished by consensus, but it is not necessary that all opinions of the member organizations agree. For example, some organizations call for the abolition of the death penalty, while others call on more stringent usage and its limitation to only the most serious crimes. AOHR has stated its independence from parties and governments since founding. For that reason, funding has had to be self-funding. Leadership has been restricted from those who hold party positions or carry executive power rank in the state. Sometimes, membership has had to be restricted to other organizations because of their basic charter. Sometimes it was restricted to those who ended up ministers or even president of the republic as happened in Sudan.

Relations with governments began bad, but ended up divided between conflict on one side and fields of cooperation on the other side.

Conflict began in 1986 when the AOHR called for its first general assembly. We were met by a governmental decree prohibiting activity in

[23] Egyptian HR activist – member of AOHR – Cairo

response to two grievances submitted by the late King Hussein criticizing AOHR activities in Jordan. There was also a complaint from Sadam Hussein sent to President Mubarak to the same effect. As there were problems between Egypt and some parts of other nations like Jordan and Iraq, Egypt decided to not permit the general assembly. It announced AOHR and its activities illegal. AOHR brought two suits against the government. One of them was urgent and concerned the general assembly. The other was on the legality of the AOHR. The general assembly was held in Sudan. The second general assembly was held in Tunisia in 1990. The third was in Cairo in 1993, which unfortunately witnessed the disappearance of our associate Mansour Rashid Kikhia.

The fourth general assembly was held in Morocco. For 16 years things progressed into helping open up dialogue and cooperation with governments, like the position AOHR took on the necessity of Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait that paved the way to contacts with the Kuwaiti government later on. In spite of many problems between us and the Egyptian government over laws, the 18-year state of emergency in force, and the cases we have won – and lost – in the courts, it is true that none of our materials have been confiscated, nor any of our premises invaded. We arrived this last year at an agreement of sorts over an establishment agreement that ended a 16-year dispute.

As for relations with civil society organizations, there was a strong attraction. There were parties that saw us formed along similar principles and ideas. We see the difference between party and juridical fields, of course. We are not against the government except insofar as it commits abuses. We support freedom of opinion, expression and the opening of dialogue to all.

As for AOHR's fields of work, we work in the field of human rights by any means at our disposal. We deal with trials, government abuses, the media, and bring suits. What has distinguished AOHR is its dialogue with governments over human rights. That has been done in most Arab nations. We announce some talks and their details. Sometimes we leave agreements that we have arrived at in consideration of real-life circumstances. We announce our estimation of such promises. Our last attempt was with Bahrain in all subjects in the area. The talks were preceded by discussion and cooperation with appointees on issues of state security court cases, torture, and disappearances. We left with some very positive results.

Finally, AOHR forms all its bodies in a democratic way. We discuss issues and often form a consensus. Sometimes there are criticisms and hot-blooded arguments in the organization.

So we now come to the essence of the matter. There are long discussions over professionalism and volunteerism in the organization. There are long discussions over broadly-bassed and local work, as well as over specialization and the big picture. The importance of what we call performance indicators has become clear: When Kikhiya disappears and does not reappear, is the organization what failed in demanding his return and finding out his fate? Is it that the organization failed or that the disappearance and murder were to scare it? For that reason, we turn to performance indicators to evaluate our work and establish accountability in the organization.

Heritage and Us...!!!!!

[24]By: Haythem Manaa

The title of this speech was "Us and Heritage", but I changed it to "Heritage and Us" because we are still hostages of tradition and we begin with what is greater than us.

Heritage is not only political heritage. Heritage is cultural, in the sense of professional and traditional. Heritage is political in the party and other senses. Heritage is social because we carry it with us in our daily lives.

The reasons I concentrate on this subject, and the reason I have worked so long on it, are a number of incidents that met me. I was at a demonstration in Paris and all of the demonstrators were from rights organizations, as we had invited them all. The demonstration was in front of an Arab embassy – it doesn't matter which one. When we arrived in front of the embassy raised one of the activists up over my shoulders and she began to chant "REPRISAL...REPRISAL", I balked because our case was a rights case and our colleague was calling for punishment. I left my position in the front.

When I speak of heritage, it is sometimes a political heritage that we bear. I am not talking of everyone. Simply, there are people that wish to wipe out their past and I choose to work with what they lived through, at least enough to be able to say to a fellow partisan, "I'm sorry, I can't take the same position again; you are a person of authority and I am opposition. you are a person of the ministry and this is natural. I am an observer of elections that you are part of. My neutrality is required so that I can fill the very least of my duties. I am a referee in the playing field and not one of the players."

Like my last cultural meeting. When the Salman Rushdie affair blew up, we met with a number of writers including the late Algerian writer Mohamed Harbi and Mostafa Soliman and others. We issued a press release that stated: "If you want to kill a writer when he writes, then kill all writers. We are all Salman Rushdie. Every one of us propagate writing." This created an uproar and a wide campaign, so we issued other press releases. Some artists and writers met with me and told me, 'Heitham, you have a big future and this story will destroy your name. The people in our nation want murder. The supporters of murder are more and stronger

[24] Spokesman of ACHRO – Syrian HR Activist

than the supporters against murder. The West's defense of Salman Rushdie will be enough.'

There was a meeting in Oman that turned into a long discussion on defining human rights ideology. The issue is pertinent. I have left ideologies to work with another ideology. Human rights is a body of principles. It is a body of ideas. It is an unfinished project. When we say "change", then we must need it. Someone has responded to me, "We are a faithful society that does not believe as you, but as Muslims." Truly, we have a crisis of thought relating to social, cultural and political heritage. Add to that the question of heritage as arbitrary authoritarianism. No one among us, even those who have lived through many a political experiment, has seen more than two presidents. Those lucky among us who have voted and lived through two presidents, well, we have the same problem anyway. It is the problem of one, dominating president. There have been many side effects of this issue. In the Arab Commission, Dr. Monasaf stood and said, "No more than five days has been given me. If five days become ten, then we turn into Lebanon. If I am given a year, it will separate into two stages and become like the lives of presidents." Unfortunately, we face many negative setbacks, but we will not be finished by them without addressing them honestly and openly in our discussions. The pròblem is that we are scared to do this, so as not to hurt feelings.

Two and a half years ago, something memorable happened. The founders of the Studies Center were young kids trying to accomplish something. So, an officer of some center calls me up and asks if I know these people. I say I had met one once. He says to me, 'We are going to put an end to this center,' and then asked if we were with the human rights movement or the security forces?! We have never carried on a discourse that does not relate to human rights. Perhaps we can remember the sad crisis that happened in Egypt when a press release was released about me in certain societies when we were students. The press release was two or three pages and it had nothing to do with human rights nor the human rights movement...The content doesn't matter. Every one of us carries within us the traces of this heritage. I am convinced that we are inn need of auto-analysis to rid ourselves, bit by bit, of this heritage if we wish this movement to succeed.

There are a number of reasons for this:
The political generation had agitation and martyrs for a cause. This was good. As for the human rights generation, we have gotten rich beyond what is necessary. If our movement was attacked, none of us would die. With exceptions, the experiences are different from my experience in

agitating, in prison, in undergoing hunger and strife. In human rights, students graduate and go right to human rights organizations that pay better than being a doctor, engineer or professor and they can work less. Many organizations have done that. Just like Fadel El Ghademsi said, I will continue to speak to the issue until we find a solution, until we overcome. I don't say this because I love to berate myself, but because I fear organizations being berated. So by being hard on organizations, we will drive out the evil in front of the public and the good will draw near. This is what happens in my experience. I will speak to my experience in the International Federation with complete objectivity. For two years I was in the Federation with Violette, and we could vote in spite of the fact we did not have the right as appointees that were not elected. After two years, I had to see two elements coming into the Federation or me going out of it...

These are:

1. Globalization in the sense of balance between North and South in the Federation.
2. Democracy in the Federation. The president could order anything.

I have been undemocratic a number of times, like when there was a request to support the Sharm El Sheikh summit and I said in a capacity as representative of the president of the Federation, that the summit, from a human rights point of view, was an American definition of terrorism. Then I said we call for democratization and globalizations. They refused to vote on it in the small board. I think the idea could succeed in another place, with other people and in other, more objective circumstances.

Chapter 7

Arab Network for Campaigns and Urgent Actions..

The Arab Program for Human Rights Activists

[25]Arab Network for Campaigns and Urgent Actions

The Arab human rights movement tries every day to create advanced means for carrying out their work. The movement tries to develop mechanism, which correspond to current developments, and which are able to contend with the extent of the violations carried out by Arab governments. These mechanisms are also intended to spread the idea of human rights to Arab countries, especially in order to make basic rights a fundamental interest of the average citizen in Arab countries. Freedoms, rights, public organization, the right to personal security, freedom of opinion and expression--these are not merely western innovations. They are not merely foreign ideas which plant the seeds of spy forces in organizations, as different Arab organizations imagine. Rather, they have become of essential interest to every citizen. They are a part of the structure of his concerns, and of his daily life , which increases the pressure on him day after day.

Given this, Arab activists continuously try to develop protective mechanisms and mechanisms of work through a consciousness of the necessity of developing the best means which can secure the development and spread of the work of Arab organizations and Arab activists in Arab societies. The development of principles of human rights become a part of the consciousness of the entire population, in the street, not as an imported creation from foreign sources, but as a necessity to preserve the rights of the people and guarantee their freedoms. With these beginning developments, the Arab human rights movement has begun to create new work mechanisms to secure the unity and solidarity of the movement, the consideration that issues of Arab human rights can not be separated one from the other. The establishment of the Arab Program for Human Rights Activists has been a natural development, stretching to a complete vessel which gathers Arab activists and their organizations in their different countries within united work projects to every Arab country. Likewise, the idea of Arab institutions for human rights which crystallized as a result of the deficiency in educational organization offer services to Arab organizations in the field of education of human rights. The Arab (Committee?) for Human Rights and the Arab Program for Human Rights Activists, each of these organizations

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[25] Proposal Introduced to The Conference: Arab Human Rights Activists on the threshold of a New Century- Rabat, Morocco3 –5 December, 1999

present/develop projects which function on a regional level and which concern every Arab country.

But the question which arises/ presents itself: has the Arab movement used up, the support from mechanisms and functions of new Arab work for the protection and creation of solidarity with activists who are exposed to the most heinous violations day after day? The answer of course is No.
It has now become necessary to oppose the violations which Arab activists are exposed to. There is a range of violations which they face, from extra-judicial killings and psychological and physical torture, to being prevented from work, being followed, they have their traveling documents seized, they are threatened, and terrorized. The answer to the previous question can not be a theoretical one. The answer must be translated into practical steps and effective work which will help build a strong Arab front which can ward off the harsh campaigns against Arab activists, against their activities and organizations. Therefore, APHRA, given that it is an Arab organization which works in the field of defense and protection of Arab human rights activists, presents a new kind of network. The network we propose is an Arab network for campaigns and urgent actions. The following pages describe/defend our vision of this network.

The Current Problem

Many Arab activists and their organizations face a variety of violations within their countries every day. A number of Arab organizations issue individual statements criticizing and condemning these violations, depending on their field of specialization, their interests, how close they are to the violations This sometimes reduces the effectiveness of these statements, lessening the reaction towards the violations. They generally have little or no effect on stopping the violations against the activists or rights organizations.

The Nature of the Network

The network is an effective Group of Arab activists representing every Arab country and Arab human rights organization. The network will exist for the exchange of information and organization of prompt action against violations against human rights activists. It will also be a means for taking the necessary measures/steps to put a stop to the violations against the victimized activist or activists.

Primary Goal for Establishing the Network

The main goal behind this network is to unite the efforts of Arab human rights activists and organizations, in order to make the solidarity campaigns for victimized activists more effective, and to intensify efforts to defend them, by presenting a united front against violations.

Goals of the Network

1. To work for the creation of means for protecting Arab activists from different organizations, as well as those not working within organizations or human rights centers.
2. As a call to create wider solidarity methods and shared work to oppose violations faced by Arab activists.
3. To use the most current and effective means to document, publish, and disseminate information on every violation faced by Arab activists.
4. To observe and conduct field investigations of violations against Arab activists.
5. To create methods for prompt/fast work to ensure the protection of activists at the moment a violation occurs, in order to put a stop to the violation.
6. To create and update protective mechanisms which function through Arab organizations, and to unite their efforts in this regard via the network.
7. To coordinate between different Arab human rights organizations in order to oppose violations with a united front.
8. To intensify the regional and international solidarity with Arab activists.
9. To organize urgent campaigns to oppose violations faced by Arab activists.
10. To develop and coordinate special sessions for training Arab activists in observation and field investigation skills.

Scope of the Network and Target Groups

This network will be directed towards every Arab country, and every organizations and research center working in the field of human rights. It will also include Arab researchers, intellectuals, and others interested in human rights issues.

Mechanisms of the Functioning of the Network

1. Issuing urgent statements and reports after receiving from Arab organizations any information on any violation.
2. Immediate investigation and gathering of information on the case of a victim, and to offer basic legal information about the country responsible for the violation.
3. To appoint observers on the network to investigate (long-lasting) violations, and to issue reports on the cases of those victims.
4. To present petitions and (appeals?) statements ambassadors, governments, and international organizations in the country which has committed the violations, to seek the end of the violations against the activist.
5. To organization local, regional and international campaigns around cases which persist for a long period.
6. To encourage participation in the training of Arab activists in observation of cases, the writing of urgent actions, through the generalization of research and study methods of a subject.
7. Use of modern publishing methods, such as electronic mail and the internet, in the publishing of activities of the network, its statements, and its regional and international campaigns.
8. To organize the administration of solidarity petition campaigns through individuals and Arab civil society organizations outside the field of human rights.
9. The development of relations between Arab organizations, as well as Arabic and non-Arabic newspapers, for the development of processes of publishing statements through the television, radio, and written media.

Organizational and Administrative Form for the Working of the Network.

The network (functions) through an implementation committee, with six elected Arab activists every year, with a fixed address in one Arab country, where information will go to,

Chapter 8

Solidarity Fund for Arab Activists

[26]Solidarity Fund for Arab Activists

Fight the Siege of Human Rights...

The human rights movement has grown in recent years, such that it is no longer able to rely solely upon the efforts of volunteers in the administration of its organizations, nor in its continual, daily work on behalf of issues which are both urgent and critical. What the movement requires is the devoted work of a large number of activists. There is no doubt that professionalism has become a necessary part of doing the work of human rights. For many decades volunteer work was the ideal goal for those in the field of human rights. But the human rights movement has become increasingly complicated, and it has become composed of individuals working not only as volunteers. The movement now includes individuals who are working and devoting themselves entirely to human rights. These are individuals with different professional backgrounds, who have a commitment to the concepts and values of international human rights. They must be expertly trained in order to be able to help protect others, but also so that they can avoid the dangers which have become associated with working in the field of human rights. They must also have the skills necessary for exchanging information effectively, and they must be able to utilize modern technologies and human rights methodology, in order to perform their work properly. These skills include specific methods of scientific observation related to human rights violations, specific procedures and rules for proving abuses and analyzing legal texts and principles, the ability to use a range of strategies to stop violations, the ability to prepare reports and create pressure lobbying groups to work for these issues at international meetings.

An activist is a person who risks being attacked or becoming a victim, because of his or her work defending rights as they are expressed in international human rights documents. They perform this work, either individually or through organized work with others, in order to improve and protect the human rights and basic freedoms of others. It has become necessary that human rights work become a specialized profession, in addition to the activist aspects of this work. Because of their activities struggling for the sake of human rights, human rights activists are exposed to a number of dangers. Among them are: execution without trial, forced

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[26] proposal Introduced to The Conference: Arab Human Rights Activists on the threshold of a New Century- Rabat, Morocco3 –5 December, 1999

disappearance, torture, arbitrary detention, violations of their freedom of expression and opinion, restrictions are placed on the formation of organization, or they may be prevented from establishing organizations entirely, or they may be denied their right to work in general. With increasing regularity they are also being forced to live in exile, or at the very least, leave their homes. They are sometimes exposed to other measures, such as harassment, police surveillance, harassment of family members, and prevention from traveling. Activists everywhere are exposed to these violations, but especially in the Arab states.

Reports issued by the Arab Program for Human Rights Activists show that Arab activists have been exposed to many of the different violations which are mentioned above. Activists have been killed, executed, forced to migrate, imprisoned, administratively detained, tortured, restricted from establishing groups, and they have been subject to police surveillance. Members of APHRA's Board of Trustees have been detained in Sudan, Tunisia and Kuwait, as have leading members of the Sudanese Organization for Human Rights, the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, the Tunisian Organization for the Defense of Human Rights, the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights and Democratic Freedoms in Syria, the Organization for Human Rights in Djibouti, and the Committee for the Defense of the Victims of Kuwait's War.

As for killings and "disappearances," there have been leaders from the Arab Organization for Human Rights (Mansour Al-Khiya), and the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (Farag Foudah) and the Algerian Association for Human Rights, (Yousef Fathallah), and Aziz Al-Sayid Kasim (Iraq). As for the accusations which have been leveled against detainees, they have ranged from a lack of accusation entirely, to accusations that they have communicated with the foreign press, which violates the law in some states. They also include accusations of holding membership in prohibited organizations, defaming the reputation of the state, and accepting foreign funding. Similarly, the periods of detention of those activists has also varied, from just a few days to several years. Most of them have been released without trial, with the exception of leaders of Syrian Committee for the Defense of Human Rights and Democratic Freedoms who were tried by a state security court in Syria. In addition, most of the human rights activists who have been arrested have been tortured, or they have been, at the very least, maltreated, specifically those who have been arrested in Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and Syria.

As for cases of murder and forced disappearance, there has been only one case—that of Farag Faudah, responsible leader in the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights and a member of its previous Board of Trustees—in which the perpetrators of the crime have been arrested, tried, and punished. Whereas the local authorities have not investigated other cases, such as that of the assassination of Yousef Fathallah and other of the members of the Algerian Association, as well as with the assassination of Mahdy Amil and Hussein Marwah in Lebanon, and Fadil Rasoomy in Austria. Investigations of these types of cases have often been suspended. For example, there has been no progress in the case of the disappearance of Prof. Mansour Al-Kakhiya, member of the Board of Trustees for the Arab Organization for Human Rights.

Everyone asserts that Arab activists are genuinely living in danger, under pressure of extremely harsh violations. This observation is confirmed by the homicide of Yousef Fateh and Abd Allah Bounasire, as well as by the imprisonment of Nazar Nayouf and Mohamad Dahry. Other examples include the cases of Mansour Al-Kakhiya whose fate is unknown, as is the case with Aziz Al-Sayid Kasim. In addition, many Arab activists have been prevented from traveling, their wages have been blocked, and their personal property has been violated. They have been prevented from performing their work because of arbitrary measures. Authorities pursue them and threaten their business dealings in their private work. In addition, activists have had their cars, offices, and homes broken into.

It is very unfortunate that the means which Arab activists have to fight these violations are very weak. These measures of protest have been limited to mere responses or reactions which turn the activist into so many clippings in an old newspaper, or a case in the archive of urgent actions and reports. An activist is exposed to violations, which becomes a case which explodes then dies out. Then we sink our energies into the issue trying to protect him. And all the while, the harsh conditions in which he lives intensify with the passage of time. As if our consciences could be at ease when we issue condemnations and protests against these harsh conditions. We do not reduce our efforts, and the successes which we have achieved in defending and protecting Arab activists. But we see that it is also necessary to develop these efforts and extend them to wider matters. If activists are killed or disappear into prison, we must rally together for the sake of their families.

Despite the fact that our work for the defense of human rights, the social dimension of our dealings with activists remains vague. The activist

remains responsible for his or her family, a member in the society who carries the social responsibilities and personal burdens. This is an especially dark picture, the details of which we can not ignore. What we desperately need today is to enhance the solidarity among us, to know each other, share in each other's problems and ambitions. We must work with this concept of solidarity, and widen it from the idea of a specific solidarity case which is concerned with a single person. The concept of solidarity must embrace broader horizons, such that it takes into account every aspect of activists' lives.

It has become necessary to search for ways to support human rights activists in the Arab world. Despite the United Nations' latest Declaration for the Protection of Human Rights Activists (10 December 1998), and all the mechanisms which are in place to enhance the protection of activists, there are still special problems related to the material support of activists who have been subject to difficult conditions. In addition, Arab human rights organizations have not yet achieved the appropriate legitimate status from the authorities in order to provide a stable, legal situation in which to carry out their work. There is no doubt that the efforts to protect and support Arab human rights activists are sincere. But there is nothing wrong with trying to fill in the gaps which still remain, in order to achieve the results which are proportionate to the work we do and the ambitions which we are capable of achieving. Thus, the Arab Program for Human Rights Activists proposes an initiative to supplement our efforts to defend and protect Arab human rights activists. This "Solidarity Fund" initiative will be designed to support Arab human rights activists. APHRA thus offers a few ideas about how to build this fund, the mechanisms necessary for its functioning, its mission, and its goals.

I. Goals of the Solidarity Fund: To create a specific mechanism for covering the current lack of support for activists.

1. To provide a means of support for the security of those who work in human rights organizations in the event that the authorities close these organizations, so that these individuals working in human rights can enjoy all their rights in their work.
2. To provide adequate support for those activists and their families who fall ill, or for those who are exposed to harsh violations.
3. To support Arab activists who are exposed to danger, injury, unemployment, or illness.
4. To establish an information network comprised of all human rights activists in the Arab world; and to present information on the guaranties/securities of workers' rights, which are lacking due to the absence of governmental recognition organizations.

5. To provide a measure of material support for Arab human rights organizations for the implementation of their own social programs for human rights activists.

II. Building the Solidarity Fund: To create a fund from an elected group of human rights activists from different Arab countries; among its missions will be:

1. To create the guiding criteria which will govern how material support from the fund is granted to activists and their families.
2. To seek donations as well as Arab organizations and individuals to participate in the Solidarity Fund, and to determine how this participation will work, and to define the percentage of private participation in relation to the participation of rights organizations.
3. To choose human rights activists and their families who have been exposed to violations which have weakened or destroyed their means of obtaining a livelihood , to grant them support from the Fund.
4. To define the criteria for exceptional support for activists and their families who work under exceptionally harsh conditions.
5. To define the internal statutes and working mechanisms for the Fund.
6. The elected group will establish a work strategy which will correspond with the capabilities of the Fund and circumstances surrounding it.
7. The committee will develop the strategy of the fund related to the formation of a human rights workers' union.

III. Financing the Solidarity Fund: The Arab Program for Human Rights Activists suggests that funding for the Solidarity Fund be entirely Arab to raise the morale of Arab activists, and also to enhance the level of solidarity among them, such that they can stand together to stave off any possible suspicions which authorities committing the violations may raise in relation to the Fund and its goals. We therefore propose the following:

1. That every Arab human rights organization participate with a fixed amount through a yearly membership.
2. That individual donors as well as donations from Arab NGOs be sought.
3. That the finances be increased through means that can open to increase the income of the Fund, such as having a constant deposit, and so on.

In Conclusion:

The Arab Program for Human Rights Activists presents this initiative. We trust that there is a deep understanding among all Arab human rights activists and international organizations that such a practical program as the Solidarity Fund is necessary. We are confident that people will recognize the importance of supporting the work of Arab activists in this way, to guarantee the continuation of their struggle for the sake of human rights. Thus, we present an open invitation to build this Solidarity Fund and implement it in an effective way.

Appendix A

The Rabat Declaration..

The Arab Program for Human Rights Activists(APHRA)

The Moroccan Association for Human Rights(MAHR)

[27]The Rabat Declaration

Between the end of a century and the beginning of a new century's aspirations, the Arab movement for human rights witnesses various functional, structural and theoretical problems in a world where human rights has become an issue of vital necessity for humanity. This implies that Arab human rights activists will have to embark on a frank and courageous dialogue for a precise examination of the nature and character of the present phase of development and the activists' role whether on local, Arab, or international levels.

Our movement has achieved a magnificent professional progress, qualitatively, and quantitatively while at the same time facing external political and social attempts at restricting and suffocating the movement, along with tremendous obstacles against protective mechanisms. Unfortunately, on the verge of the third millennium some two hundred activists are either in exile or behind prison bars, while others are deprived of their passports.

Our legal right for existence is still blocked by the authorities and security departments that obstruct our ability to invite the symbols of our movement to such a mass meeting because of repression. Along with these external problems, the movement also faces internal flaws emanating from the conditions of emergence, professionalism, finance as well as the absence of long and medium term strategies and the various defects of political and social heritage.

For these and other various reasons, activists from Arab countries and those in exile flooded into Rabat to attend the conference, sponsored by the Arab Program for Human Rights Activists and the Moroccan Society for Human Rights from 3 to 5 December 1999. Attendants discussed some of these problems in an attempt to formulate suggestions and perceptions for the promotion of public activity and human rights organization in the Arab world.

The conference posed the question of Arab activists' conditions and the challenges facing their movement in the era of globalization, taking into

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[27] Declared regional and universal on 6th December 1999

account the cultural and linguistic variation in the Arab world. In this context, the attendants expressed their views on the human rights organizations' ways of formation and administration. They also discussed the obstructions hindering the promotion of their performance and their ability to provide better and more comprehensive protection for activists as well as the improvement of human rights' conditions in the Arab countries. After through discussions, the attendants reached some conclusions summarized as follows:

- Increasing the movement's dependence on voluntary activity with more attention be given to training experienced and specialized cadres for the best performance of daily activities.
- Abandonment of all forms of authoritarianism with an aim to institute a democratic atmosphere within human rights organizations to appreciate cooperative values and to pave the way for the development and qualification of young generations enabling them to carry the responsibility of leadership.
- Introduction of modern communication technology to break the siege imposed on human rights organizations.
- Enhanced coordination between Arab activists through strengthening the existing, and development of new, networks with reinforced bonds with regional and international networks.
- In view of the scarcity of local and regional funds, it is inescapable to accept unconditional foreign support, which should not contradict our principles, priorities, and/or objectives, putting more emphasis on the principle that finance in itself is not our target.
- Lobbying for more democratic laws for the organization of public activity, and for public associations to partake in the development and formulation of such laws.
- The promotion of field work activities by training activists on more effective mechanisms and removing the legal, cultural, or social obstacles that impede the development of such activities.
- The attendants stressed on the right to freedom, dignity, and socioeconomic security, and renounced the policies aiming to starve peoples, depriving them of the right to life, food, medical treatment, shelter and development, in a call for an immediate end of the blockade imposed on the Iraqi people.
- The attendants stressed on the vitality of international legacy and condemned the policy of double measuring on issues of human rights.
- The attendants insisted that women's rights constitute an inalienable part of the cause of human rights and demanded that:

1. Human right organizations list the rights of women among their priorities,
2. The development of internal democratic mechanism to strengthen the women's role in these organizations,
3. Urging governments to ratify the Agreement on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and lobbying the already member states to lift their reservations and put the agreement's stipulations in force.

- Stressing that knowledge is a right that should be available to every citizen against the de facto uneven development of the information revolution, the attendants called for democratic dissemination of knowledge.
- Encouraging the activists to devote part of their time to evaluate and generalize their own experiences.
- Stressing the necessity to unite the organizations' activities with the objective reality, especially those organizations in exile.
- The importance of training and educating the activists to improve their skill, intellectual and spiritual formation so as to possess wider awareness of the constitutional and legal framework of their own societies, and the international instruments and conventions. They also stressed the importance of improving the activists knowledge of their local techniques and to acquire the skill of critical interaction with the prevailing trends, as well as the development of a human rights education program with the necessary requirements for its achievement.
- Urging governments to embody human rights education among the students' curriculum in cooperation with activists.

Three working groups have been formed within the conference's repertoire and through consecutive three days, they discussed some practical mechanisms on:

I. The development of solidarity fund for human rights' activists. The conference adopted the idea at the condition of negotiating it with organizations and activists in the Arab countries. A special committee has been formed to carry out the project and to communicate with the concerned parties while the Arab Program for Human Rights' Activists undertakes the responsibility of coordination with the group's coordinator.

II. The establishment of an Arab lobbying networks for urgent action to protect human rights' activists in the Arab countries. The conference discussed the idea of the networks and decided that the Arab Program for Human Rights' Activists cooperates with the group's coordinator.

III. The formulation of a code of ethics for the Arab human rights' movement. After thorough discussion the conference recognized the necessity of moral and behavioral obligation, and called for making the widest possible contacts with the organizations and activists for a final and comprehensive formulation of the movement ethics. The Arab Committee for Human Rights undertakes the responsibility for making such contacts.

The Arab Program for Human Rights Activists
The Moroccan Society for Human Rights

Rabat , Morocco – 6th December 1999

Appendix B

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Appendix C

List of Conference Participants

The list of Conference Participants

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Kamal Mugeeth
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Rashad Antonious
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Lara Khytan
Jordan

Aseim Rababah
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Alice Keiruze Suliman
Lebanon

Violette Dageeher
Lebanoon

Fadel Gadamci
Tunisia

Najat El Yakubi
Tunisia

El Hashimi Ghaam
Tunisia

Jamal El Deen Al Adimi
Yemen

Fadl Ali Abdellah
Yemen

Hanan Deiab
Palestine

Mohamed Hafez Yakub
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Khaleel Abu Shimalah
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Algeria

Naser El Ghazali
Syria

Haythem Manaa
Syria

Hussein Al Awadat
Syria

Kazem Habeeib
Iraq

Abdel Hussein Shaban
Iraq

Zahei Azar
Lebanon

Shawki El Tabeeb
Tunisia

Hafeizah Bin Saleh
Morocco

Mohammed Zahari
Morocco

Fatima El Shamakhi
Morocco

Hakimah El Shawi
Morocco

Mohamed El Mistikawi
Morocco

Abdel Ghani Areif
Morocco

Al `Arwsi Abdel Galeil
Morocco

Mohamed Bin Azzoz
Morocco

Abdel Eillah Bin Abdel Salam
Morocco

Zakiah El Shabie
Morocco

Jamal El Deen Bo Girarah
Morocco

Lili Amile
Morocco

Osamah Khaleel
Morocco

Hussein El Faitori
Libya

Abdel Hadi Khawagah
Bahrain

Latifa Bwshi
Morocco

El Shafei Hakeem
Morocco

Abdel Hadi Gabad
Morocco

Abdel Razik Hanwshi
Morocco

El Magnawi Fatima
Morocco

Aminah El Merdini
Morocco

Lafw Saeed
Morocco

El Shafeei Mustafa
Morocco

Abdellah Musdad
Morocco

Abdel Rahman Bin Amro
Morocco

Hassan Id Bilgasim
Morocco

Appendix D

List of Organizations

List Of Organizations
Participated Rabat Conference

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- Arab Program For Human Rights Activists – Egypt
- Morocco Association for human rights – Rabat
- Arab Commission for Human Rights – France
- Sudanese Human Rights Organization – Cairo Branch
- Arab Organization For Human Rights – Egypt
- Center of Egyptian Women Affairs – Egypt
- Legal information and studies Center – Egypt
- Jordanian Association For Human Rights – Jordan
- Lebanon Association for human rights - Lebanon
- Tunisian Society for Human Rights – Tunisia
- Association of Young Lawyers for HR – Tunisia
- Association for Democratic Women – Tunisia
- Civil society Coalition – Yemen
- Yemeni Human Rights Organization – Yemen
- Palestinian Doctors for human Rights Association – Palestine
- Al Dameer Organization – Palestine
- Committee for Peace and democracy in Algeria – France
- The Moroccan youth Center for Human rights – Morocco
- Taowq for human rights – Lebanon
- Amal Association – Morocco
- Ligue Dimocratique des Droits de Femmme – Morocco
- Amnesty International – Morocco
- Amnesty International – Tunisia
- Gessor Organization – Morocco
- Damascus Center for Social Studies – Sweden
- Committees for democracy and freedoms in Tunisia – Tunisia
- Iraqi Association for human rights – France
- Arab Organization for human rights – London
- Bahrain Human Rights Organization – London
- Moroccan Human Rights Collation – Morocco
- Freidreich Nauman – Egypt / Morocco